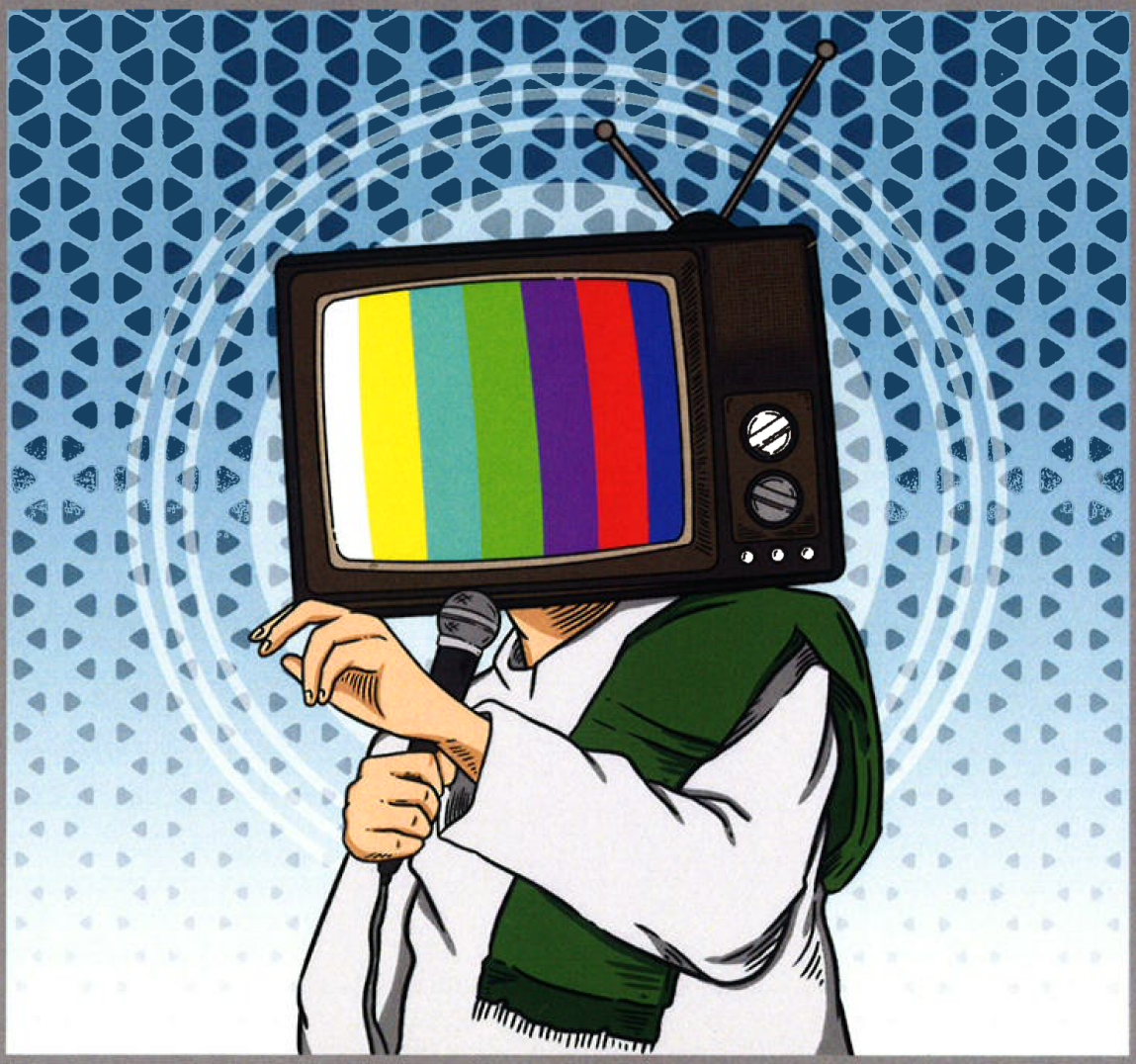
Mediating Islam in Post-Suharto Indonesia: Performing Dakwah through Popular TV Shows



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MEDIATING ISLAM IN POST-SUHARTO INDONESIA
Performing *Dakwah* through Popular TV Shows

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is about the rise of Islamic propagation (known as *dakwah* in Indonesian) on private TV stations[1] in post-Suharto Indonesia. During Suharto's New Order[2] regime, Islamic activities such as *dakwah* were closely controlled and monitored by the state. Suharto's policy restricted Muslims' participation in politics by merging Islamic political parties into one, United Development Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* or PPP), but supported their religious activities (Hefner 2000: 15-20). For example, he built 999 mosques throughout the archipelago when he was in power and approved the establishment of Islamic banking (Hefner 2003: 154).[3] Due to this policy, Muslims confined their concentration on social, cultural, and economic activities such as *dakwah* and Islamic banking. *Dakwah* activity became popular among urban middle-class Muslims in Indonesia during the 1980s. For example, Muslim university students in West Java held Islamic religious gathering (*pengajian*) on campuses (van Bruinessen 2002: 117). The trend of *dakwah* on campus was triggered by the change of political atmosphere in the mid of 1970s when Suharto began to lose political support from Indonesian military forces. He tried to gain Muslim political support by establishing Indonesian Council of Islamic Scholars (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia* or MUI) in 1975 and the Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association (*Ikatan Cendikiawan Muslim Indonesia* or ICMI) in 1990. Suharto's closest advisor, B. J. Habibie was appointed as its first chairman (van Bruinessen 2002: 135 and Salim 2011: 295-323).

After Suharto's resignation in 1998 due to the economic crisis and mass student-led protests, *dakwah* content increased significantly in media including magazines, books, audio and video cassettes, radio (Sunarwoto 2013), and cinema (Huda 2010 and 2012). *Dakwah* programmes began to

[1] I use the term 'private' and 'commercial' TV station interchangeably to distinguish it from public or state-owned TV and community TV stations, which also increase significantly in 2010.

[2] Suharto, the second president of the Republic of Indonesia after its independence, named his period as New Order and the previous as Old Order.

[3] Alwi Shahab. 2019. "Suharto Membangun 999 Masjid di Indonesia [Suharto Built 999 Mosques in Indonesia]". https://www.republika.co.id/berita/pw6krm282/soeharto-membangun-999-masjid-di-indonesia. Last accessed, January 5, 2021.

flourish on TV stations from the beginning of 2000s. There was also *dakwah* content which were uploaded to the internet but were not popular due to poor internet access until 2010. The rise of *dakwah* in media, especially on private TV stations was enabled by the change of press regulation. B. J. Habibie, who replaced Suharto, amended press law number 40/1999. The new act of press drove the country to the proliferation of media platforms (Romano and Seinor 2006: 122). The change of the press regulation was followed by the issuance of broadcasting law no. 32/2002, which provided private TV channels to establish and broadcast all over the country (Royan 2008: 292). As a result, private TV stations like *Surya Citra Televisi* (SCTV) and *Rajawali Citra Televisi* (RCTI) were established and were broadcast to most cities in Java and several cities outside of Java in the late 1990s (Hill and Sen 2005: 27). Today, their broadcast can reach almost all districts in the archipelago.

The increase of *dakwah* broadcasting on TV stations after the fall of Suharto in Indonesia raises questions about commodification of Islam, Islamic resurgence, and religious authority: how are *dakwah* programmes produced on TV stations and distributed to the society? What can the social and education backgrounds of the TV preachers tell us about the transformation of *dakwah* on TV channels? How are *dakwah* programmes on TV debated and competed by various Muslim organisations? How is religious authority formed through *dakwah* broadcasting on TV stations? This study strives to answer these questions throughout its chapters by observing the processes, contents and various parties involved in the production and distribution of the broadcasting of *dakwah*. This includes the producers, preachers, and audiences. In the following section, I will explain the dynamics and changes of *dakwah* activities in Indonesia and, later, the broadcast of *dakwah* during Suharto's regimes to provide the backgrounds of its rise in the aftermath. Afterwards, I will describe the proliferation of private TV channels in post-Suharto periods.

Understanding *dakwah* on TV

Dakwah on TV is perceived as the strategy to disseminate Islamic teachings to reach mass audiences by using TV as one of the media platforms. It aims to intensify Muslims' faith and piety to live based on Islamic teachings. It is also used to persuade non-Muslims to convert to Islam. *Dakwah* for Muslims is part of daily routines as it is an Islamic obligation to do so. It is conducted in mosques, houses, hotels, and so forth and can mostly be heard in public spaces. Public sermons are performed and echoed through microphones in

mosques in Indonesia on Friday where Islamic messages are transferred to the public (Muzakki 2008: 205-206). Cassette sermons are played in mosques to be heard by public dealing with daily matter faced by the society (Hirschkind 2006). The contents of *dakwah* are uploaded in the internet (Nisa 2018). The trend of *dakwah* from conventional strategies to mediated platform is influenced by the development of mass media technology in Indonesia and in the Muslim worlds. This also happens in other Muslim countries such as in Malaysia with the young imam audition (Barendregt and Hudson 2016: 184-187), Egypt with the broadcast of TV preacher, Amr Khalid (Moll 2010 and Wise 2003), in Mali with TV preacher, Cherif Haidara (Schulz 2006 and Soares 2005), and in Turkey with TV preacher, Fetullah Gülen (Yafuz and Esposito 2003). Therefore, the broadcast of *dakwah* on TV is a global trend.

This trend can be seen as part of 'Islamic resurgence' (Smith-Hefner 2007: 398) where Islam becomes more visible and dominant in the public sphere. Mediated *dakwah* platforms provide alternative voices of Islam to more established methods, which refer to Muslim organisations like Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, and MUI (Salvatore and Eickelman 2004: xii-xiii). On the other hand, the trend of *dakwah* on TV may also be considered as part of 'conservative turn' of Indonesian Islam, which changes the images of Indonesian Islam from 'tolerant and inclined to compromise during the Suharto's regimes to intolerant face of Islam marked by violent inter-religious conflict, jihad movement, and a series of simultaneous bombings of churches in 2000, as well as the Bali bombings in 2002 after the fall of Suharto' (van Bruinessen 2013: 1-2). Furthermore, it may be just part of commodification of Islam for economic purposes (Hasan 2009 and 2013). The trend is also can be viewed as both conservative turn and commodification of Islam. As a result of the proliferation of *dakwah* programmes on TV stations, Islamic religious authorities have been fragmented (Eickelman and Picastori 1996) and contested by various institutions and individuals (Eickelman and Anderson 2003).

In August 2013, there was a controversy regarding the cost of inviting a popular TV preacher, Soleh Muhammad, familiarly called Solmed, to Hong Kong. He was asked to preach in front of Indonesian Muslim community in Hong Kong. This event was organised by *Thariqul Jannah* (Way to Heaven), an Indonesia Islamic learning group based in Hong Kong. The chairman of the group, Lifah Khilafah, protested Solmed publicly via YouTube and talked

to the press that the cost asked by Solmed's management was too expensive.[4] This news raised fierce responses from Indonesian Muslims including scholars. Indonesian Muslim scholars believed that based on the Quran and hadith it is not permitted for preachers to receive payment from their congregation for their sermons. The news was spread and shared by through social media platforms. Lifah Khilafah said that Solmed's management changed their first agreement. She further explained that at first, Solmed agreed that the organiser just provided the airfare and accommodation for him during his stay in Hong Kong. However, when the organiser confirmed their agreement regarding the event to Solmed two weeks before its date, Solmed asked the organiser to talk to his manager. The discussion with his manager, disappointed the organiser because of several changes from the first agreement. According to the manager's calculation, the organiser should pay Solmed for his preaching, cover all the return airfare for him and his family (his wife, children, and parents), his manager, and his close friend, who would join him to Hong Kong. The manager also asked the organiser to pay them for a visit to *Disneyland* in Hong Kong.[5]

Popular TV preachers like Solmed have become common since the eaerly 2000s. They have rhetorical skill and highly charistmatic. Abdullah Gymnastiar, known as Aa Gym, was the first TV preacher, who enjoyed his popularity through commercial TV channels after the fall of Suharto. His appearance has been observed by several scholars, for example, Howell (2008: 47), Hoesterey (2016), and Njoto-Feillard (2018: 165-176). Hoesterey asserts that 'he solidified his standing as a national figure during nationally broadcast sermon live from Istiqlal mosque in December 2001 when he was invited before the audience that included … president Megawati Soekarno Putri' (Hoesterey 2016: 41). There are new preachers appearing on TV channels regularly, such as Arifin Ilham, Yusuf Mansur, Jefri Al-Bukhori, Maulana, Mamah Dedeh, Badrussalam, Arifin Nugroho, and Solmed. These regular TV preachers are distinctive figures because they seem to avoid being affiliated with Muslim organisations or institutions like NU, Muhammadiyah, and MUI, most of them do not have Islamic education in Islamic boarding

[4] "Pengundang Ustad Solmed di Hong Kong Angkat Bicara [The Event Organiser of Preacher Solmed in Hongkong Speak Out to Public]". https://hot.detik.com/celeb/2330680/pengundang-ustad-solmed-di-hong-kong-angkat-bicara. Last accessed, December 5, 2014.

[5] "Soal Tarif Dakwah, Ustad Solmed Akhirnya Minta Maaf [Preacher Solmed Finally Apologised concerning the Cost of His Preaching]". https://www.liputan6.com/showbiz/read/676402/soal-tarif-dakwah-ustad-solmed-akhirnya-minta-maaf. Last accessed, December 5, 2014.

schools (*pesantren*), and they have stories considered a redemptive transformation from 'bad' to 'good' Muslims.

The increase of TV preachers underline 'the important role of the media and mediation of Islam, Islamic symbols, and religious experiences in society and politics' in Indonesia and in the world in the 21st century (Heryanto 2014 and Hoover 2016: 2). Democratisation of the media allow TV industry to flourish and fulfil the majority of the audience's expectations in the country for Islamic products and contents including TV programmes (for example, Jones 2010: 91 and Lukens-Bull 2008: 220). Further, the appearances of TV preachers offer Muslim communities alternative religious authorities shaped through popular and entertainment cultures in the media (Hoover 2016: 3). This type of religious practice is part of global trend of the resurgence of religion, which shows the relationship between media and religious authority, which is complex and multi-layered (Hoover 2016: 2-3).

Dakwah broadcasting on TV in Suharto's New Order era

During the Suharto era *dakwah* was shown on TVRI, Television of the Republic of Indonesia (*Televisi Republik Indonesia* or TVRI), a state-owned TV station. It was the only TV channel until 1993 which was aired nationally or at least accessible in most cities in the provinces (Sen 1994: 119 and Istanto 1999: 99).[6] TVRI had regional branches in Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Medan, and Manado (Kitley 2014). There is no evidence about *dakwah* programmes before Suharto took power in 1966. During Suharto's New Order regime, *dakwah* became part of Islamic programmes, which were broadcast once a week. The format, content, and preacher were monitored by Suharto's government through the ministry of information. There were three Muslim organisations, which involved to preach on TVRI. The preachers delivering sermons at that time were selected by the government from NU, known as the traditional Muslim organisation in Indonesia and Muhammadiyah, a modernist Muslim organisation in Indonesia. The members of NU and Muhammadiyah, who were appointed by TVRI to give sermons, were likely to be affiliated with government institutions such as Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) and MUI (Hasyim 2015: 488) and ICMI. For example, Tuty Alawiyah (d. 2016) was regular preacher on TVRI and a member of MUI and ICMI. TVRI appointed these preachers because they were considered

[6] The details about the broadcast of TVRI where *dakwah* is included in religious programmes can also be found in the annual reports of TVRI in 1983 and 1985.

qualified to deliver sermons on TVRI based on their Islamic education backgrounds and most importantly the preachers supported the government's agendas. They, for instance, should be in favour of and promote the government's programme of family planning (*Keluarga Berencana* or KB) to limit the growth of birth of Indonesian population (Sirry 2013: 102). Another example of TV preacher during the New Order era was Zainuddin M.Z. (d. 2011) known as 'the preacher with a million followers' (*Da'i Berjuta Ummat*). Before appearing on TVRI, Zainuddin was popular as a preacher throughout Indonesia and his sermons were recorded and sold in the forms of articles in magazines and cassettes (Hadi et al. 1994). He was from NU and was active in PPP, a political party which merged several Islam-based parties including NU.[7] Although both Tuti and Zainuddin were from NU, it would be misleading to assume that all the members of NU supported the government at that time. The voices within NU regarding support for Suharto's government were varied. It is well-known that NU often criticised New Order government's programmes when Abdurrahman Wahid (popularly known as Gus Dur) became its chairman in …. (Bush 2009).

It should be noticed that the rise of *dakwah* programmes on TV in post-Suharto has challenged NU as one of the religious authorities. NU is the largest traditional Muslim organisation in Indonesia, which was established on January 31, 1926. NU follow four schools of Islamic law, the saint's cult, and Sufi brotherhood. They promote themselves as a 'middle path' (Ichwan 2005: 5-26) between extreme rationalists (*aqli*) and literalists (*naqli*). It was formulated by Arab Sunni Muslim theologian, Abu Hasan Al-Asy'ri and Samarkand Sunni Muslim theologian, Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi (Zayd 2006: 43-44, Barton & Fealy 1996, and Feillard 1999). NU approves local traditional practices as long as they are not in contradiction to Islam (Hosen 2004: 5-26). Most NU *dakwah* was conducted in rural areas through *pesantren* (Bush 2009), while today it is also disseminated through cities.

Another Muslim organisation, whose religious authority is challenged by the rise of *dakwah* on TV in post-Suharto Indonesia, is Muhammadiyah, the largest modernist Muslim organisation in the country. Muhammadiyah was also involved in *dakwah* on TVRI during the Suharto era. It was founded on November 18, 1912. In theology, they followed one of the reformist scholars from Egypt, led by Muhammad Abduh, who proposed the

[7] Petrik Matanasi. 2018. "Zainuddin MZ: Dai Sejuta Umat, Politikus Sejuta Massa [Zainuddin MZ: The Preacher of a Million Followers, the politician of a Million People]". https://tirto.id/zainuddin-mz-dai-sejuta-umat-politikus-sejuta-massa-cCKz. Last accessed, October 12, 2017.

purification of the teachings of Islam from non-Islamic practices by the return to the Quran and the prophetic traditions. Therefore, Muhammadiyah is well-known as a reformist organisation, which tries to eradicate the mixing of religious practices between local and Islamic traditions. In Islamic law, Muhammadiyah draws on the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence but in practice they mostly hold the Hanbali's (Anwar 2005: 27-44). It is a reformist socio-religious movement, advocating *ijtihad*, individual interpretation of the Quran and Hadiths, as opposed to *taklid*, the acceptance of the traditional interpretations propounded by leading Muslim scholars.[8] Since its establishment, Muhammadiyah has adopted a reformist platform mixing religious and secular education, primarily as a way to promote the upward mobility of Muslims toward a 'modern' community and to purify Indonesian Islam of local syncretic practices (Zayd 2006: 43 and Syamsuddin 1995: 35–72). Muhammadiyah *dakwah* activities are performed mostly in cities through universities, schools, mosques and in philanthropic activities.[9]

Both NU and Muhammadiyah are not funded by the government. Since the establishment of MUI in 1975, which was funded by the government during New Order regimes, some members of NU and Muhammadiyah, who supported Suharto's leadership, have become the members of MUI. Despite the fact that it was continuously funded by the government, the MUI is non-governmental institution, whose chairmen are elected by its members. Its central board is settled in Jakarta. It has branches in some provinces and regencies throughout the Indonesian archipelago. In his speech for the opening of the council, Suharto outlined that the MUI should play four roles: it should (1) serve as the 'translator of the concepts and activities of national or local development for the people'; (2) become a form of advisory council that 'gives advices and opinions to the government concerning religious life'; (3) become the 'mediator between the government and the *ulema*'; and (4) function as a place where the Muslim scholars discuss 'the problems related to (their) duties.' (Ichwan 2005: 45-72). These points were later declared as the missions of MUI.

[8] For more details, see Muhammadiyah. "Anggaran Dasar Muhammadiyah". http://www.muhammadiyah.or.id/id/content-51-det-anggaran-dasar.html. Last accessed, April 26, 2015.

[9] For the more discussions on Muhammadiyah, see, for instance, Mitsuo Nakamura. 2015. *The Crescent Arises over the Bayan Tree: A study of the Muhammadiyah Movement in a Central Javanese Town, c. 1910s-2010.* Singapore: ISEA-Yusof Ishak Institute and Howard M. Federspiel. (Oct. 1970). "The Muhammadijah: a study of an orthodox Islamic movement in Indonesia." *Indonesia* (10): 57-80.

In addition to these roles, van Dijk (2001: 44-66) asserts that Suharto's main aim in establishing the council is to persuade and control devout Muslims in order to support his policies in the government. The position and function of MUI change in line with socio-political condition in the country. The demise of Suharto's regime in 1998 forced MUI to redefine its position and role in the Muslim society and the state. As a result, the council changed its missions to five points: '(1) the heir to the Prophets in spreading Islamic teachings and striving for the construction of an Islamic life; (2) a *fatwa*-provider for the Muslim community 'whether requested or not'; (3) a guide and servant to *ummah* (Muslim community); (4) an agent for 'reform and renewal; and (5) an upholder of the Quranic dictate to enjoin good and avert evil.' (Ichwan 2005: 45-72). The members of MUI often became the preachers of *dakwah* programmes on TVRI.

Based on the list of programmes of TVRI in the weekly tabloid, *Monitor Radio & Televisi* in 1981, *dakwah* programme was aired on TVRI on Thursday evening every week during Suharto's regimes. It began with the recitation of several verses of the Quran and then continued with preaching which was named *Mimbar Agama Islam* (the Pulpit of Islam). It seemed the programme was set to welcome the holy day in Islam, Friday. Based the prophetic traditions, Friday is considered a blessed day in which Muslims perform a Friday prayer and those, who, recite the Quran on this day gain more rewards from God than in the other days.

The term *mimbar* from Arabic *minbar*, the pulpit from which a preacher speaks during Friday prayers, was also used for other religious programmes such as pulpit of Catholicism and Protestantism (*Mimbar Agama Katolik and Kristen Protestan*) and pulpit of Buddhism (*Mimbar Agama Budha*). Only for Hinduism is a different term used term - namely pulpit of belief in the one and only God (*Mimbar Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*). The absorption of Arabic terms into Indonesian is a common phenomenon. It shows the influence of Islam in the national cultural domain. The Suharto government restricted religious ideologies, especially Islam, in terms of their political rights emphasising that *Pancasila*[10] was the only ideology in the country (Kitley 2008).

[10] *Pancasila* is the official philosophical foundation of the state of the Republic of Indonesian which consists of five principles; (1) Belief in the one and only God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives, (5) Social justice for the whole of the people of Indonesia.

Religions, which were officially admitted based on the 1945 Indonesian constitution (*Undang-Undang Dasar* 1945 or UUD 1945) at that time were Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. All the religions were given chances to broadcast their religious programmes on TV once a week to a national audience (TVRI 1982 and 1985). Although all religions had opportunities to broadcast, Islam had more time allocation because it was aired in 40 minutes while other religions had less than that: Buddhism had 25 minutes, Christianity 15 minutes, and Hinduism is 30 minutes (Tabloid Monitor 1987). It reflects how the government favoured Muslims as majority.

Religious programmes on TV during Suharto's government were problematic to religious organisations and communities since they could not accommodate religious diversity. For example, Christianity has more than two groups (Catholicism and Protestantism) in Indonesia. Islam in the archipelago consists of various organisations including NU and Muhammadiyah. Each of these groups and organisations has different agendas, goals, and targeted audience for their *dakwah* activities on TV. Moreover, each of them defines *dakwah* on TV as a means to enhance their religiosity. Based on these facts, simplification in the broadcast of religious programmes on TVRI among the religious groups was unavoidable.

As mentioned above, the New Order government closely monitored the religious broadcasts. *Dakwah* on TVRI was part of government programmes clearly stated in Presidential Decree Number 215 of 1963, article 4. This pertains to the establishment of TVRI as a service of a public function in national development specifically mental or spiritual and physical development, and building Indonesian social personality (Leo 1972). Therefore, the programme was in accordance with the objective of national mental or spiritual development of characteristics (Rakhmani 2013).[11]

In Quranic recitation programmes, there would normally be two people on screen, sitting next to each other. One would recite some verses of the Quran, and then the other slowly translated them into Indonesian. Generally, the verses read in the programme were related to the topic of the sermon, which was delivered by the preacher in the programme. Therefore, the verses of the Quran they read before the programme, were selected based on the topic of the sermon. Afterwards, the main agenda of the programme of

[11] For more information about Suharto's programme of Family Planning, see Badan Koordinasi Keluarga Berencana Nasional. (1992). *President Suharto and Family Planning.* Jakarta: National Family Planning Coordinating Board.

propagation of Islam at that time was *Mimbar agama Islam*. It was held on the stage before the camera with two people sat in cosy sofas, one of them, the preacher faced the camera, and the other sat beside him seemingly as a master of ceremony who led the programme. The programme was often recorded live in front of a studio audience consisting of men and women sitting separately in front of the preacher.

On some occasions, the programmes received questions from home audiences related to various social and personal issues, and the preacher would read out and answer them mostly based on their opinions. To Indonesian Muslims, therefore, the programme was not only a medium to learn Islam, but also a means to negotiate problematic issues in their everyday life. For example, the audience would ask about whether or not Muslim women are permitted to work in offices or how to be a good wife and career woman at the same time. This interaction between audience and preacher indirectly provided a space for a religious authority to be formed. The construction of religious authority occurs when the audience as a student seeks a religious answer or advice of a problem to the preacher, who act as a teacher.

Dakwah programmes before the fall of Suharto show that TV stations were used for religious and political agendas. This leads to some questions about what happens to *dakwah* programmes on TV after the democratisation of Indonesia? Do NU, Muhammadiyah, and MUI still become the only religious authorities for Indonesian Muslims in the post-Suharto era? Does the government still have control of TV programmes? The next section will elaborate the beginning of the proliferation of private or commercial national TV stations which play an important role in the rise of *dakwah* and Islamic programmes on TV.

The emergence of private TV channels

The rise of *dakwah* programmes broadcast on TV was made possible by the increase of private TV stations in Indonesia in the late 1990s. TV programmes become the centre of the attention in the number of hours spent on a daily basis by Indonesians (Heryanto 2008: 5). This study on TV and Islam is, therefore, significant to understand the complexity of its relation to social, economic, and political circumstances in regard with the diversity of Indonesia's Muslim population. In this study, I focus on commercial TV channels under the Association of Indonesian private TV or ATVSI in which most of private TV stations in the country are members. These commercial

TV channels cover most cities throughout Indonesia. As such, TVRI and community TV channels are not included in this study.

After the fall of Suharto, the owners of private TV stations, which consisted of RCTI, SCTV, ANTV, Indosiar, and TPI established ATVSI on 4th August 2000. ATVSI is an independent association of commercial TV channels to advance TV industry in Indonesia to bring together common interests and platforms based on ethics and responsibility of broadcast. The board of ATVSI are selected from commercial TV stations and, more recently, several other commercial TV stations have joined ATVSI, which include Metro TV, TV ONE, TRANS TV, TRANS 7, and Global TV. TPI has changed its names to MNC TV. The programmes broadcast by the members of ATVSI have many similarities in terms of format and design because to some extent they share similar ideas and agendas.[12] The broadcast of these TV stations covers many cities in the country. They are the most frequent to broadcast the programmes even though some are owned by non-Muslim corporations.

Based on geography and ownership, TV in Indonesia consists of three main categories: state-owned, commercial, and community TV channels. These three categories play central roles in the discussion of this book. The state-owned TV station, TVRI was the only national TV station prior to the reformation era. TVRI was established in 1962 and has branches in all of the provinces of Indonesia (TVRI, 1983). Since the establishment of TVRI, TV in Indonesia has experienced two phases. In the first phase, five commercial TV stations were established between 1990 to 1995, that were broadcast only in particular areas like in Jakarta and Surabaya (Kitley 2003: 93). These included Metro TV, TransTV, Lativi, Global TV, and TV-7. Metro TV is owned by Surya Paloh, a media entrepreneur associated with Media Indonesia, *Televisi Transformasi* (TransTV) is owned by Chairul Tanjung, a banker with Bank Mega, Lativi is owned by Abdul Latief, the *Pasar Raya* tycoon, the owner of TV-7 is the Gramedia Group, and Global TV is owned by Nasir Tamara (Kitley 2003: 105). The second phase happened after reformation when five new commercial TV stations were established between 2000 to 2002, which included *Rajawali Citra Televisi* (RCTI), *Televisi Pendidikan Indonesia* (TPI), *Surya Citra Televisi* (SCTV), *Andalas Televisi* (ANTV), and Indosiar.[13] Some of these commercial TV stations extended

[12] For more information about ATVSI, see ATVSI "Asosiasi Televisi Swasta Indonesia [Private TV Association of Indonesia]." http://atvsi.or.id/aboutus.php. Last accessed, December 5, 2014.

[13] For the ownership of these commercial TV channels, see Table 1.2. For further

their broadcast coverage and became accessible almost in all the provinces in Indonesia (Hollander, D'Haenens, & Bardoel 2009: 39–40). Like TVRI, commercial TV stations have branches in several provinces in the country.

The renewal of the Broadcasting Act 1996/1997 in 2002 introduced KPI, an independent regulatory body representing public interest (Hollander, D'Haenens, & Bardoel 2009). After the amendment 2002, the main aim of the KPI was to take over the authority of government to control, censor, and regulate the media in the country (Hollander, D'Haenens, & Bardoel 2009 and KPI 2013). However, Sudibyo and Patria (2013) has stated that this authority was short-lived owing to the liberalisation of the Indonesian media which led to the nullification of the Broadcasting Act 2002 by the government and the broadcast media owners for their mutual benefits. The rights of the KPI were taken over by issuing the Governmental Regulations in 2005 allowing the reinstatement of Department of Information to oversee media ownership. This change has significantly affected the diversity of the content of the Indonesian media.

Although commercial TV stations, which were established before reformation, they only became successful in the reformation era. The Governmental Regulations of 2005 has made it possible for five major companies to own ten existing national commercial TV stations (see Table 1.2.).

Table 1.2. Acquisition of TV stations by Indonesian media groups.[14]

Media groups	TV
Media Nusantara Citra (MNC)	RCTI, Global TV, MNC TV
Trans Corp	Trans TV, Trans7
Bakrie and Brothers Group	ANTV, TV One
Surya Citra Media	SCTV, Indosiar
Media Group	Metro TV

Media Nusantara Citra (MNC) Media is a media company established by Hari Tanoesoedibjo in Jakarta in 1997. This corporation

discussion about the on air of commercial TV channels, see Khrisna Sen and David T. Hill. (2000). *Media, Culture, and Politics in Indonesia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 111 – 119.

[14] This table has been adapted from Sudibyo and Patria (2013: 267-270) which maps the ownership of Indonesian media companies by Indonesian conglomerates including TV and radio stations, print and online media.

includes radio, TV, newspapers with its nationwide outreach. Although the owner of the company is a Christian, commercial TVs under MNC media still broadcast a number of Islamic programmes including *dakwah*.[15] Trans Corporation whose previous name was *Para Inti Investindo* is part of CT corporation owned by Chairul Tanjung, a former minister of several departments during Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's (SBY's) presidency. Like Hari Tanoesoedibjo, his company operates in TV, radio, and newspapers in Indonesia.

The Bakrie and Brothers group is a large trade company established in 1942 and operates in many sectors including media, coal mining, palm oil plantation, and so forth. In addition to ANTV and TVOne, the Bakrie and Brothers group is involved in mass media business such as newspaper. Their central figure is Aburizal Bakrie, a former general chairman of *Golongan Karya* (Golkar) political party. He is a former minister of Economy and People Welfare during SBY's presidency.

Surya Citra Media is a media company which operates commercial TV shows and is also a screenplay production house. It was founded by Eddy Kusnadi Sariaatmadja in 1999. Last but not least, Media group is a media company established by Surya Paloh, a central figure of Golkar who lost to Aburizal Bakrie in Golkar general chairman election and then established his own party *Nasional Demokrat* (Nasdem).

These owners of TV stations control the programmes of their TVs including news, films, and *dakwah*. A TV programme in one of TV stations mentioned above can only be broadcast with the approval of the owners. The acquisitions of commercial TV channels from Suharto's family and their associates, not to mention the establishment of new commercial TV stations after reformation, have significantly influenced the increase of Islamic teachings broadcast in various forms of programmes including *dakwah*. TV programmes are determined by TV station officials and staff under the control of the owners who focus on income enhancement of the company and they use *dakwah* programmes as a market in which they can gain profit from advertisements, especially when the programmes are led by famous preachers such as Mama Dedeh and Yusuf Mansur.

Related studies

[15] RCTI is the only station that broadcasts a Christian-focused programme on Sunday mornings.

The rise of programmes with Islamic content after the New Order era has attracted scholarly attention including ranging from reality shows, soap opera, films, talk shows and other forms (Arps and Heeren 2006, Kurnia 2009, Hoesterey and Clark 2012, Barkin 2014, and Ida 2009). *Dakwah* activities in general has been studied by several scholars such as Julian Millie through his extensive study on *dakwah* activities in Wast Java (Millie 2011 and 2017) and Akh. Muzakki's study on Friday sermons in Surabaya (Muzakki 2008). However, the analysis on *dakwah* on TV stations is absent from their studies. Julia Howell, however, has noticed the rise of *dakwah* on TV in post-Suharto regimes. In her study, Howell (2008) argues that *dakwah* programmes on TV were established to support the urban Sufism movement, which is generated by the rise of middle- and upper-class Muslims in Indonesia, which is evident in urban areas like Jakarta, Malang and others in the post-Suharto regimes.[16] According to her findings, these programmes which propagated Islam on TV is part of that movement, in which Muslims seek to improve their faith and piety and develop their spirituality similar to its Egyptian counterpart. However, Howell limits her analysis on the contents of *dakwah* on TV and pay less attention to the account of commercial TV agendas in the programmes.

Other studies focus on specific TV popular preacher (Hoesterey 2016) or TV preachers and their narratives only (Burhani 2020) but neglect the importance of media technology. Hoesterey argues that Aa Gym's background plays an important role to develop his career as a preacher to the broadcast of his preaching on national private TV stations. Aa Gym is popular among Muslim communities in Bandung, West Java. With his awareness of the importance of media, he spread his propagation of Islam through magazines, books, comics, and radio under the management of MQ to raise his fame among the communities in Bandung. He also owns a modern boarding school, Darut Tauhid which has many sub-divisions including a tour package in the boarding school for his followers. Aa Gym has been able to attract followers from all over Indonesia after he became a TV preacher. He brands himself as a family and loving husband and successful businessperson

[16] Urban Sufism is a phenomenon of Muslims' gathering in urban areas to recite verses and prayers together for the success of their lives led by well-known *ulama* (Muslim scholars). This gathering is mostly attended by Muslim middle and upper class in which they build network based on economic interests. For further discussion, see Julia Day Howell. 2008. "Modulations of Active Piety: Professors and Televangelists as Promoters of Indonesian 'Sufisme." In *Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia,* eds. Greg Fealy and Sally White,40-61. Singapore: ISEAS.

(Farida 2009, Hoesterey 2008 and 2016 and Watson 2005). Burhani (2020) focuses his analysis on TV preachers' narratives about 'dark' lived experiences before they become preachers. He calls the transformation of the preachers' deeds from bad to good by becoming preachers as conversion which forms their religious authority. The background of Yusuf Mansur and Mamah Dedeh, two of the popular TV preachers in post-Suharto is misleading by identifying them not to have Islamic education background. He also overlooks the role of narratives in shaping religious authority, but neglect the important role of TV stations, producers, and distributions of the preachers' *dakwah*. This study aims to fill these gaps by investigating the process of selecting the preachers, the role of TV crews, the background of the preachers, the formats of the programmes, contents, discourses, and debates of *dakwah* programmes on national private TV stations.

Theoretical framework

The study in this book uses the concepts of commodification of Islam, remediation, religious authority, and audience to understand the trend of *dakwah* on TV in the post authoritarian Indonesia.

1. Dakwah on TV as a commodity

I will use Greg Fealy's definition of commodification of Islam as 'the commercialisation of Islam or the turning of faith and its symbols into a commodity capable of being bought and sold for profit' (Fealy 2008: 16-17). The intention of commercial TV industry to broadcast *dakwah* turns its activity into a 'commodity,' which, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is defined as something which (1) has the equality of being wanted or useful; (2) is 'an article of commerce' or 'object of trade' (Fealy 2008: 16). The broadcast of *dakwah* programmes, which are designed by the producers and their teams with creativity to compete with other programmes made by other TV channels, are offered or sold for profit to the sponsor or audiences for profit (Fealy 2008: 17). This process is considered as commodification of Islam.

We cannot neglect, however, religious motivation and intention of Muslims in the broadcast of *dakwah* on TV. It can be viewed as the continuation of what Smith-Hefner refers to as 'Islamic resurgence' which has happened since the 1970s (Smith-Hefner 2007). She witnessed the increase of visibility of Islamic symbols and practices in Yogyakarta during her eight months ethnographic fieldwork in between 1999 and 2003. *Dakwah*

programmes on TV is part of this trend. Islamic resurgence, in this book, is seen as the motivation and intention of Muslims to express their piety in public places to persuade others to follow their attitudes (*dakwah*). The result of this expression is contentious as discussed in Chapter 5 of this book.

2. Religious authority

The daily broadcasts of *dakwah* through popular TV shows provide a number of choices of preachers for Muslims in Indonesia. In Islam, preachers are considered as leaders of their communities. They lead prayers, give advice and guidance, and solve problems or give answers for questions from their communities. After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, Islamic leadership is open to every Muslim through routinely offering advice and interpretation of the Quran. Authority can be achieved through schools, media, and websites, and is not limited by gender. The openness of Islamic leadership produces diverse religious authorities which are contested among Muslims in Indonesia. In regards to preachers in the media, Bryan S. Turner in his article "Religious Authority and New Media" illustrates that:

> Their authority is essentially the authority of a good teacher who comes to earn the respect of his students and followers because he offers what is regarded as sound advice on matters that have some spiritual import, such as diet, marriage, sexual behaviour, domestic management of the household or interaction with strangers. (Turner 2007: 119).

Although Turner's focus of the study was religious authority on the internet, his concept of religious authority can also be used to analyse religious authority on TV. Criticising 'Weber's three forms of legitimacy (tradition, charisma, and legal rational norms of authority) in his *Economy and Society* (1968) [which] do not adequately describe the emerging norms of legitimacy in web-based system [and on TV]', Turner (2007: 120) further defines religious authority in the contemporary Muslim world as one which is 'local, popular, and customary' within Muslim societies. The concept of customary is relevant to Weber's (1968) 'routinisation of charisma' which means that authority can be conducted through repetitive forms of learning (Turner 2007: 118).

Authority is different from power, which is defined as 'the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests' (Weber 1964: 152). While power may make use of force and coercion,

authority emphasizes voluntary submission. The submission to religious authority, as Gaborieau (2010: 1) explains, is based on the 'common values and rules of conduct' between the two parties: those who hold authority and people who submit to it.

Weber's definition of authority is, to some extent, in contradiction to that of Islamic authority in contemporary Indonesia. Before the reformation era, Islamic authority referred to Muslim scholars, such as leadings figures of the NU, Muhammadiyah and the MUI, or religious teachers in Islamic boarding schools. The Islamisation and democratisation of Indonesia since reformation contribute to new emerging religious authorities. The proliferation of commercial TVs, which regularly broadcast the programmes of the propagation of Islam, provides a big impact on the formation of a religious authority and ideology in Indonesian public sphere. A preacher can reach recognition, popularity, and charisma through routine appearances and sermons through TV shows. In this respect, Turner advocates that:

> New technologies have contradictory ideological effects. They provide alternative, deregulated, devolved and local opportunities for debate and discussion, and hence they make an indispensable contribution to a democratic civil society. The new media (such as internet and TV) are important politically and sociologically, because they have the unintended effect of corroding traditional forms of authority that are either based on oral transmission or print-based forms of textual learning that is linear, hierarchical, imitative, and repetitive (Turner 2007: 118).

The mushrooming of the preachers in the *dakwah* programmes on Indonesian TV has offered Muslim audiences in Indonesia choices of religious authority. In short, Muslim audiences do not have to come or ask questions to the MUI or Islamic boarding schools to ask for advice or answers about their religious matters because TV has provided the alternatives, which can easily be reached via telephone, electronic mail (email), and Internet. They can watch, listen, and interact with the preachers from their homes, offices, and other places either private or public.

The discussion of the media, Islam, and authority concentrates on the effects of information technology (such as TV). The role of media in shaping an emerging authority is critical because media interest of the market steers the preachers on TV to get as many audiences as possible from whom the media can benefit. As a result, the important character of preachers on TV is

their attractiveness, more than their insight into Islam. As Turner (2007: 119) suggests that 'in the contemporary world (Indonesia), the traditional authority of the *imams* is often rejected and unqualified, but (Muslim) popular leaders (such as preachers on TV) feel confident to issue legal judgement' (Turner 2007: 119).

In addition to Turner's concept of religious authority, the performance of *dakwah* on television is also relevant to Kaptein's concept of religious authority that the preachers in the programmes perform as Muslim scholars (*ulama*), who give their religious opinions based on their interpretations of Islamic sources (the Quran and Hadiths) to answer the questions delivered to them from their audiences (*mustafti*).[17] According to Kaptein's concepts, religious authority is not only related to fatwa, an opinion based on Islamic law concerning particular issues given by Muslim scholars or organisations (Kaptein 2004: 549), but also religious advices and recommendations from them (Kaptein 2004: 122).

3. Remediation: immediacy and hypermediacy

Most of the TV programme producers set up their programmes of *dakwah* live on TV stations. This is intended to provide the audiences real experience and 'immediacy' (Bolter and Grusin 1999). Moreover, some of them are broadcast in the historical sites that are relevant to Islam and the preachers talk about the importance of these sites for Muslims to make the audience as if they were there. This form of broadcast is recognised as 'hypermediacy' (Bolter and Grusin 1999). The two processes of mediation were acknowledged by Bolter and Grusin as 'remediation'. It is a concept in the theory of media that appeared in the last decade of the twentieth century 'because of the rapid development of new digital media and the nearly as rapid response by traditional media.' (Bolter and Grusin 1999: 5). In respect of this study, remediation of *dakwah* programmes on TV provides efficacy, and authority by 'repurposing' older media forms such as printing and radio (Bolter and Grusin 1999: 68). It happens through delivering sermons and discussion in the programmes.

4. Audience as an agent

Audience of *dakwah* programmes on TV plays a vital role in the construction of religious authority in the society. The preachers attain their

[17] M*ustafti* is understood as Muslims, who come to Muslim scholars to ask for fatwa, advice, or recommendation concerning socio-religious matters they encounter in their lives.

popularity among national audiences through the programmes. The audiences of *dakwah* programmes on TV can be passive and active. A passive audience just receives what they watch without argument or criticism, while active one make their stance to what they watch through their response or criticism (Kitley 2008: 208 and McQuail 1997). Before reformation, the government controlled TVRI. As mentioned above, the control over the TV station before reformation was to support the government agendas of nation building and promote *Pancasila*[18] as the sole ideology in the country (Kitley 2008).

According to Kitley's findings, the attitude of TV audience has shifted from passive to active along with the socio-political change in the country after reformation (Kitley 2008: 208). This shift of audience's attitude is marked by their participation and commentaries on TV programmes, which in turn become public debate (Kitley 2008: 208). In post-authoritarian Indonesia, the forms of their participation vary from requests to protests against of a particular TV programme which frequently occur. In respect of *dakwah* programmes on TV, the audiences also involve in the commentaries and debates concerning the programmes in private and public sphere (discussed in details in Chapter 5).

To analyse the audience of the programmes of *dakwah* through TV in Indonesia, I use Webster's three basic models of audience in his article 'the audience' (1998). These three basic models of audience consist of *audience as mass, audience as outcome,* and *audience as agent*. Further Webster (1998: 191) states that 'occasionally, these basic models intersect, implying more complicated concepts of the audience'. Although Webster's three basic models are not specifically addressed to TV audience, they are relevant to analyse the programmes.

The concept of audience as mass describes that the study on TV media audience should emphasise what is watched and consumed by the audience including all its controversies regardless of their understanding of it.

> Under this model, the audience is seen as a large collection of people scattered across time and space who act autonomously and have little or no immediate knowledge of one another. They are defined as an entity by their common exposure to media. Certainly, if we include research done by and for media industries, and the many

[18] *Pancasila* is the official philosophical foundation of the state of the republic of Indonesian which consists of five principles; (1) belief in the one and only god, (2) just and civilized humanity, (3) the unity of Indonesia, (4) democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives, (5) social justice for the whole of the people of Indonesia.

> social institutions that have a stake in the audience, a case can be made that this is the "dominant model" of the audience. (Webster 1998: 192).

The production quality and style of TV programmes is more important than the content of TV programmes. Indonesian Muslim audience expect the programmes of the propagation of Islam through TV, which are not merely educating and guiding, but also entertaining them. The TV preachers, who are able to intermingle their preaching with humour likely have more followers than those who only deliver their ideas and advice about the teachings of Islam.

The second basic model is ‘audience as outcome’. This model shows the power of media to influence people as their audience. Webster states that:

> This way of thinking about the audience sees people as being acted upon by media. Typically, it reflects a concern about the power of media to produce detrimental effects on individuals, and by implication on society as a whole. Less frequently, it speaks to the pro-social potential of the media. When the action is taken for the audience's "own good" it has been referred to as an audience-as-public model. When the action is taken for some corporate purpose it has been labelled an audience-as-market model (Ang, 1991). Whether for good or ill, all such models position individuals in a fairly reactive role. (Webster 1998: 193).

As noted earlier that the programmes of *dakwah* through TV is an invitation, which is by implication a propaganda delivered by preachers to call for their audience to follow their advice. The concept of audience as outcome is, therefore, relevant to investigate the audience of the programmes, how the programmes influence audience’s attitude in their lives.

In the last basic model, the audience is seen as having agency, which implies ‘what media they will consume, bringing their own interpretive skills to the texts they encounter, making their own meanings, and generally using media to suit themselves’ (Webster 1998: 194). Webster further asserts that:

> Under this model, the audience acts upon the media, not vice versa. This way of thinking about the audience takes as its central concern the question "What do people do with media?" One should hasten to add that this positioning of the audience does not mean that people are free of outside influences. Proponents of this model typically recognize that audience actions are somehow determined by their social and cultural milieu. In fact, in many applications of

> this model audience actions are deemed to be uninterpretable without reference to some broader structure. But in the interface between audience and media, it is the individual viewer who has the upper hand. Controlling this engagement is one way in which audiences are thought to exercise power. (Webster 1998: 193).

Given the fact that the programmes of *dakwah* on TV is numerous in the aftermath of authoritarian regime, the audience have space to choose what kind of the programmes they want or what kind of preachers they like on TV. Audience is the core of the production of the programmes of the propagation of Islam through TV. TV industries have an imagination of what kind of audience the programmes are provided for and what benefit they will receive by producing the programmes. On the other hand, audience has the liberty to choose what TV channels and programmes they are eager to watch during their leisure time. These facts, therefore, encourage TV industry to provide the programmes that can accommodate the interest of the audience.

Data collection

To look at texts and practices of the broadcast of *dakwah* through TV, I employ ethnography as an approach. This approach works to observe the whole process of the practices of the broadcasting, ranging from the production to the reception, and from the producers to the audiences. It includes structured interview, which I prepare before going to the field, and also unstructured interview based on my curiosity during the interview. I also visit traditional markets, cassette stores, bookstores, coffee shops, and *warung* (food stalls) where people eat and talks about their daily lives and watch TV while eating to capture the nuance of religiosity and understand the act of watching TV and what they watch. I also observe one family in each city to deeply understand the activity of watching *dakwah* on TV in the society. Islamic jurisprudence is used as a method to compare the criteria of preachers based on the teachings of Islam and producers.

The data are drawn from ethnographic notes combined with the written sources including books, periodicals, reports, pamphlets, Internet, and audio-visual materials such as recordings and videos. The investigation of the written sources serves to give additional and information in details related to the background of the broadcasting of *dakwah* on TV. The texts of *dakwah* on TV are approached as a social construction, by putting them into their social contexts. For these purposes, the database of *Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia* (The Committee of Indonesia's Broadcasting or KPI) and the

recordings of *dakwah* programmes on TV, which are uploaded to YouTube are relevant. Ethnographic notes are analysed to construct the discourses related to the modes of production, circulation and responses concerning the broadcast of the propagation of Islam through TV.

Fieldwork was conducted in Jakarta, Medan, and Bali (Denpasar and Kuta) for one year from November 2014 to April 2015 and from May to October 2016. These three locations is hoped to provide a big picture of the audiences of *dakwah* programmes on TV. Jakarta is relevant because all private TV companies are located in the city of Jakarta. Besides, it pictures the audience from Java Island. In Jakarta, I investigated the background of the preachers, the production and the audience of the programmes by interviewing the preachers, producers, and some people, who watch the programmes. Medan is used as a case study from Sumatra. More importantly, the number of Muslims and non-Muslims are almost equal based on the census in 2015.[19] It is intriguing to see how Muslims in Medan respond to the *dakwah* programmes on TV. I interview some people with various backgrounds from students, lecturers, to drivers of *Becak Montor* (taxi of motorcycles or Bentor). I lived with a lecturer's small family during my fieldwork in Medan. In Bali, Muslims live as minority among a Hindu majority. I investigated whether Muslims in Bali watch the programmes of *dakwah* by attending Muslim congregation in Denpasar and Kuta to know their activity and meet informants of this research. I live with and intensively interview the owner of Muslim travel, a tourism agent with special offer to visit *Wali* (Muslim saints), whose tombs are believed by some Muslims are in Bali, to know more about Muslims in Bali.

In-depth interviews and focus group discussion were conducted with preachers, producers, and members of the creative teams of *dakwah* programmes, audiences both live and at home with different backgrounds in terms of gender, occupation, age, and ethnicity. I also interview Muslim leaders and scholars from NU, Muhammadiyah, MUI to know their opinions about the broadcast of *dakwah* on TV.

Watching programmes of propagation of Islam on television is analysed based on social class and gender (Burke 2005: 68). During the fieldwork, I

[19] For more information about Medan, see Badan Pusat Statistik. January 2017. "Luas Wilayah, Jumlah Penduduk, dan Kepadatan Penduduk menurut Kabupaten Kota di Sumatera Utara [Width of Areas and Population Density in accordance with Distict Cities in North Sumatera Province]." https://medankota.bps.go.id/statictable/2017/01/18/87/luas-wilayah-jumlah-penduduk-dan-kepadatan-penduduk-menurut-kabupaten-kota-di-provinsi-sumatera-utara-2015.html. Last accessed, April 18, 2018.

collected the data in three areas: Jakarta, Medan, and Bali in twelve months. I conducted ethnographic data collection based on Morley's insight that 'the basic unit of consumption of television should be the family/household rather than the individual viewer' (Morley 1992: 138, Gillespie 1995, and Nilan 2001: 85). Morley's statement is relevant to the case of watching programmes of *dakwah* because Muslims in Jakarta and Medan watched programmes of propagation of Islam with other Muslims, with members of their own household, neighbours, relatives, and friends in their houses, small restaurants, stalls and so forth. Most of the ethnographic data came from my observations in the houses of the respondents. I usually interviewed them and their family members soon after they watched a particular programme of propagation of Islam. I also conducted in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 120 respondents. These respondents include those who attended the live programmes of propagation of Islam in the studio, mosques, and other shooting locations in Jakarta.

Structure of the dissertation

This book consists of six chapters including the introduction and conclusion. In Chapter 1 of this book, I discuss *dakwah* programmes on TV in the New Order period to understand the trend of *dakwah* activities in the society. I also elucidate the impact of the emergence of commercial TV stations in the twenty-first century to the proliferation of *dakwah* programmes on TV. Moreover, I discuss the institutions participate in the production and discourse of the broadcast of *dakwah* on TV.

Chapter 2 deals with the production of *dakwah* programmes on TV including the selection process of the preachers, themes and format. Afterwards, I analyse the process of remediation, and circulation of the programmes. These lead us to the findings how *dakwah* programmes on TV negotiated between commodity and piety and how charisma and leadership of TV preachers were shaped through the programmes.

Chapter 3 discuss the background of the preachers, who preached on private Indonesian TV channels. It includes their career, network, and affiliation to Muslim organisations, which are important to capture the shift of the categorisation of the preachers in *dakwah* programmes and beyond. I begin Chapter 3 with the terminology used to call the preachers in the programmes to shed light on the role they have to the audiences. Subsequently, I discuss the influences of TV and other media to make the preachers become celebrities for the audiences in the country. With their

popularity, some take their role in the political participation in the country with their social and economic capital.

Chapter 4 explores the contestation between Muslim organisations to dominate TV sphere with their ideology and political goals. In this chapter, this contestation is pictured by the protests against and debates about the programmes of the propagation of Islam on a particular private TV, which are organised by Salafi leaders and followers. They disseminated their Salafi ideology and political goals to persuade national audiences to follow and support their agendas. In some episodes, this dissemination anger other institutions. I analyse several events where the heated debates between Salafi and other Muslim organisations concerning several issues took place to discern the contestation.

Chapter 5 expounds watching practice of the audiences including their attitude and responses to the *dakwah* programmes through popular TV shows in Jakarta, Medan, and Bali. The findings of this chapter 1 indicate how *dakwah* programmes on TV provide alternative voices of Islam for the audiences, which result in the fragmentation of religious authorities and stimulate Islamic public discourses and debates.

Chapter 6 presents the findings to answer the questions raised in the dissertation.

Chapter 2

PERFORMING *DAKWAH* ON POPULAR TV SHOWS: Commodity, Piety, and Politics

This chapter deals with the ways *dakwah* is broadcast by commercial TV stations for their audiences and circulated through society. I discuss the process, chosen design, and format of the programmes. The study on the production and reproduction of *dakwah* on Indonesian TV channels is often overlooked due to the assumption that they are all about entertainment (Abaza 2004: 183 and Muzakki 2008: 206). However, we cannot deny that entertainment and popular products shape and reflect ideology and identity in the society, which are negotiated in their production (Heryanto 2014). Moreover, it is proven that Islamic identity and authority can be cultivated through the help of the media like radio (Sunarwoto 2013: 195-214 and Sunarwoto 2016: 203-230) and the Internet (Turner 2007: 177-134). It is, therefore, relevant to see how this happens in TV industry and what is its implication to the changing Indonesian Islam.

Almost all commercial TV stations have sessions for *dakwah* even though some of them are owned by non-Muslims. The contradiction between the faith of the owners and the religious programmes broadcast on their TV channels is worth-investigating. Economic interest can be more important than religious motivation to determine which TV programmes they produce. As mentioned in Chapter 1 that *dakwah* becomes one of the Islamically inspired TV programmes provided by the producers for audiences along with Islamic movies, soap operas, and reality shows. If the producers may see *dakwah* programme merely based on economic interests by imagining what type of audience they address, Muslims may see it as an opportunity to find a programme that fulfils their expectations to be entertained and educated accordingly. The presence of *dakwah* on TV enables them to learn about Islam from anywhere (homes, offices, restaurants and cars) while doing other daily activities. They do not need to go to the studios or mosques where the *dakwah* is performed in conventional ways.

In this chapter, I begin with the process of the production which depicts the tension between the producers and preachers' interests in the programmes. Further, I continue with an analysis the circulation of the programmes in

society. I then elucidate the ways routine appearances and circulation of *dakwah* on TV shape the charisma of the preachers in society.

The production of *dakwah* on TV

In this section, I describe the making of *dakwah* programmes on TV, with an emphasis on the roles played by the producer and preacher in the programme of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* (Mother and Elder Brother in Action) on Indosiar in 2015. I use it as an example to represent the broader range of the programmes. In this regard, the first important issue is a discussion of the format of the stage and topics of the programme between the producers and preachers. The second is how the broadcast is circulated to a broader audience. Together, these two factors are pivotal for analysing and understanding the reasons for decisions made in the production of the programmes and their purposes.

In 2015, the broadcasting time of *dakwah* varied among commercial TV channels. Most TV stations broadcast it every day around the time of morning prayer from 3.30am to 5.30am according to Jakarta time zone.[20] It includes, for example, RCTI, SCTV, TransTV, and Trans7. Some broadcast it at 5am to 7am such on Indosiar, and ANTV. TVOne and MetroTV have it every Sunday after afternoon prayer (*zuhur*). In general, TV channels which have daily *dakwah* broadcast do not have it on Sunday, but the time allocation for *dakwah* broadcasting may change, especially in Islamic festive days like in Ramadan. The number of *dakwah* programmes and Islamic variety shows in the fasting month Ramadan are usually aired three time a day. This is to celebrate the fasting month for Muslims. The celebration of Ramadan is obvious not only in the increased aired times of *dakwah* programmes but also in the transformation of a shopping mall to be contained with Islamic themes and decorations to celebrated Muslims' holy month (Schmidt 2012: 384-400).

Since the beginning of 21st century, *dakwah* on TV has involved in Indonesians' everyday practices and discourses together with other *dakwah* activities in the society. The popularity of *dakwah* on TV is not surprising since it has been common in Muslim communities. We can find various versions of *dakwah* activities through Muslim gatherings in rural or urban

[20] There are three time zones in Indonesia, which consist of western, central, and eastern part of the archipelago. Western Indonesia time zone covers the island of Java, Sumatera, and Western Borneo, the central time zone includes Sulawesi, Lesser Sunda Islands, Bali, and Eastern Borneo, and the eastern consists of Papua, West Papua, and Maluku. Central time zone is an hour ahead of Jakarta while eastern is two hours ahead of it.

areas, which are conducted in mosques, offices, and houses, focusing on topics such as faith, piety, and prosperity, delivered by variety of preachers with different backgrounds. One of the gatherings is called *Majelis Taklim*, 'a meeting, sitting or council where Islamic education takes place' (Abaza 2004:179). It is also a place for preachers, politician, and stakeholders to build and connect networking for economic and political interests (Abaza 2004: 179-180). Several TV preachers gain their connection to TV producers through the networking of *Majelis Taklim* in Kwitang, Jakarta (Abaza 2004: 174). Some of them attend *dakwah* programmes in the studio of TV stations through registration or invitation by the producers. In the case of Mamah Dedeh's programme in Indosiar channel at 6am, they should register to become live audiences in the studio during the programmes. The waiting to attend it can be several months to two years because there are many members of *Majelis Taklim* register for the programme.

As mentioned above, most *dakwah* programmes are broadcast roughly at the same time in the morning. Only those who are committed to Islam and are awake to perform dawn prayer (*salat subuh*) form the potential audience. However, Rahman, 44 years old, and a producer in Indosiar, assumes that Muslims in Jakarta go to bed early around 9pm and are awake early in the morning to prepare their daily activities before dawn prayer for reasons like to avoid traffic. They can watch *dakwah* programmes at this time or after the prayer before going to work.[21] Rahman's opinion reflects other producers' imagination of how audiences would watch the programmes.

As we can see in the table 2.1, commercial TV stations use various names for *dakwah* programmes with different preachers at relatively the same time. The names indicate the kind of the programmes, which means the characteristics of topics that are delivered by the preachers. For example, when the audience hear *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* (Mother and Brother in Action), most of them will recognise immediately that it is a *dakwah* programme led by Mamah Dedeh. Another example is *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* (The Exegeses of the Lantern), the audience will know it that it is led by *Quraish Shihab*, the author of the *tafsir*. Some use the preachers' names as the name of the programmes like *Kata Ustaz Solmed* (The Words of Teacher Solmed). These names can change anytime and most of the topics of the preaching are repeated in many occasions by the same or different preachers.

[21] Interview with Rahman, the producer of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi*, on Indosiar, Jakarta, January 11, 2015.

It is common in *dakwah* activities that a preacher delivers similar contents in different places and events (Abaza 2004: 172 and Millie 2011: 163).

The fact that a number of *dakwah* is produced at the same time on various TV stations recalls how the call for prayers (*azan*) are echoed at the same time in different mosques when the obligatory prayer time comes to reach any audience in particular places. The amount and intensity of both the broadcast of *dakwah* and the *azan* at the same time in diverse places is not simply about their capacities 'to disseminate ideas or instil religious ideologies but in its effect on the human sensorium, on the affects, sensibilities, and perceptual habits to its vast audience' (Hirschkind 2006: 2). In other words, the daily broadcast of Islamic learning, to a certain extent, positions the *dakwah* programmes as legitimate media for Islamic knowledge through which preachers can establish themselves as authorities and reach a vast audience.

Table 2.1.: *Dakwah* programmes broadcast by TV channels in 2015 in Indonesia

Channel	**Programme**	**Broadcast time**
SCTV	*Indahnya Kebersamaan* (Beauty of Togetherness)	Monday at 4 a.m. to 4:30 a.m.
	Kata Ustadz Solmed (The Words of Teacher Solmed)	Tuesday to Sunday at 4 a.m. to 5:30 a.m.
RCTI	*Assalamu'alaikum Ustadz* (Greeting for Teacher)	Daily 4 a.m. to 4:30 a.m.
MNCTV	*Siraman Qalbu* (The Splash of the Heart)	Monday to Friday at 4:45 a.m. to 5:25 a.m.
	Hafidz on the Street (Memoriser of the Quran on the Street)	Weekend at 4:45 a.m. to 5 a.m.
ANTEVE	*Cahaya Hati* (Light of Heart)	Daily at 3:30 a.m. to 3:50 a.m.
INDOSIAR	*Mamah dan Aa Beraksi*	Daily at 6 a.m. to 7:30 a.m.

	(Mother and Brother in Action)	
TVRI	*Indahnya Pagi* (The Beauty of The Morning)	Daily at 5 a.m. to 6 a.m.
TRANS TV	*Islam itu Indah* (Islam is Beautiful)	Daily at 5 a.m. to 6:30 a.m.
TRANS7	*Rahasia Sunnah* (The Secret of The Prophet's Life)	Weekdays at 4:45 a.m. to 5:15 a.m.
	Khazanah (Treasure)	Weekdays at 5:15 a.m. to 5:45 a.m. Saturday at 5:30 a.m. to 6 a.m.
	Poros Surga (The Axis of Heaven)	Sunday at 5:30 a.m. to 6 a.m.
	Khalifah (Muslim Ruler)	Sunday at 6 a.m. to 6:30 a.m.
TVONE	*Religi: Tafsir Kehidupan* (Religion: Life Exegesis)	Daily at 4 a.m. to 4:30 a.m.
	Damai Indonesiaku (My Indonesia at Peace)	Saturday at 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
	Butiran Ilmu (Grains of Knowledge)	Saturday at 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday at 3:30 a.m. to 4:30 a.m.
METRO TV	*Pelita Hati* (Light of the Heart)	Daily at 4:05 a.m. to 4:30 a.m.
	Tafsir Al Mishbah (Al-Mishbah Exegesis)	Occasionally in the afternoon

The broadcast time of *dakwah* is arranged in the morning based on the producers' prediction of urban middle-class Muslim routine. Based on my observation in a nuclear family in South Jakarta in 2015, the producers' assumption was correct. In a house of a small family where I stayed during

my fieldwork, their daily routine began at 3 a.m. The wife, Nuraini (33 years old), cooked and prepared breakfast for her family, while the husband, Irfan (37 years old), was taking a shower. Their children would still be sleeping at this. The husband woke up early to avoid traffic on the way to work, as a security officer at one of the manufacturing companies in North Jakarta. If there is no traffic, his commute takes around one hour from his home near Sunday Market area. With traffic it may take more than two hours. After taking a shower he performed midnight prayer (*tahajud*) and then sat in the living room reading several pages of the Quran. When morning prayer time arrived, he would go to the mosque. When he returned from the mosque, he would watch one of *dakwah* programmes together while having breakfast with his wife. He then left for work.

The wife prepared their children and took them to school. She then went to her place of work, a small and modest mobile phone shop. During my fieldwork in Jakarta, I had breakfast in food stall across the street. I watched her watching TV while waiting for customers in her shop. I came to top up the balance of my mobile phone and wanted to know what she was watching in her shop. Often times, she would be watching a *dakwah* programme of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* on Indosiar channel on a small portable TV at that time. I found in several days that she watched the same programme every morning and she told me that it was her favourite *dakwah* programme on TV. As the morning time slot is almost completely occupied by dakwah programmes, the scope for choice was limited.

The husband and wife explain that it is their habit to watch TV while having breakfast and that they would watch any programme broadcast at that time. They would often switch between channels to find the most interesting show.[22] With regards to watching *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* in her small shop, the wife asserted that it was just to spend time while waiting for the customers and to improve her knowledge about Islam and entertain herself with jokes from the preachers during her time in the shop. The *dakwah* programmes filled the gap of not being able to attend Islamic study groups as she is generally too pre-occupied with attending to her children who are seven and four years old. Her husband too does not attend Islamic study groups. [23]

Hamdi (62 years old), a retired security staff in Jamsostek office building in Jakarta, recounts a similar situation when I met him in a mosque one the afternoon. He says always watches *dakwah* programme on TV while

[22] Interview with Nuraini and Irfan, Jakarta, December 16, 2014.
[23] Interview with Irfan, Jakarta, December 16, 2014.

drinking a cup of coffee and fried bananas. He says, 'it is better to watch useful programmes rather than the programmes, which do not contain education for us. Watching *dakwah* on TV is part of learning Islam, which in Islam is an obligation since we were born until we die.'[24] Further discussion about the audience of *dakwah* programmes on TV will be given in Chapter 5.

The producers have the audiences in the island of Java in mind when they produce the programmes of *dakwah* for their TV channels. Java is important to the producers due to several reasons. Java is the most populous island in the country with more than 145 million inhabitants.[25] The producers of the programmes regard Java as their most important market. However, this evidence does not mean that they underestimate other islands in the country. It just means that they have to decide which audience that they should become their priority for the production of *dakwah* in their TV channels. On the other hand, it is important to mention that some commercial TV channels can only be reached in several areas by using additional technological device of satellite. This fact suggests that the producers address the programmes to audiences in cities where they have easy access to commercial TV channels.[26]

The format of *dakwah* on TV

Some studies have found that *dakwah* grew in popularity in cities such as Jakarta and Medan during the 1980s. *Dakwah* activities are also organised by students in public universities like Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta (Smith-Hefner 2007) and ITB in Bandung (Rosyad 2006), employees of banks (Juoro 2008: 229), large companies and government offices, and others. These activities are viewed as events to motivate their employees and improve their piety at the same time. They are supposed to provide employers and employees alike with greater meaning in their lives. The pious believe that Islam provides solutions for all problems in life and in the afterlife (Rudnyckyj 2010). Their enthusiasm for *dakwah* is one of the reasons that inspires TV producers to re-create dakwah in the form of talk show and soap operas.

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[24] Interview with Hamdi, Jakarta, December 19, 2014.

[25] Population in Java island, see Badan Pusat Statistik. February 2018. "Proyeksi Penduduk menurut Provinsi 2010 [Population Projection based on Provinces 2010]." https://www.bps.go.id/statictable/2014/02/18/1274/proyeksi-penduduk-menurut-provinsi-2010---2035.html. Last accessed, April 14, 2015.

[26] Interview with Rahman, the producer of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi,* on Indosiar, Jakarta, July 29, 2016.

The competition among TV producers to produce attractive *dakwah* programmes results in the change of the formats, names, designs, and teams of the programmes. Some producers hire a creative team from an external production house to design the programmes. The producers try to keep the programmes interesting and entertaining for the audiences. Rahman explains that:

> The key of becoming a producer is creativity to find innovation in order the programmes the producers create are interesting to watch by audience. With workload burden they have; the producers need other opinions (such as from creative team) and products of TV programmes from production houses to reduce the burden. In respect to production houses, the producers usually receive some proposals of TV programmes for *dakwah* and then asses which programmes to be broadcast and duration of the broadcast. The producers buy the programmes based on the agreed contract.[27]

Production houses, which create *dakwah* programmes on TV, usually produce other programmes such as *sinetron* (soap operas). In regards to the themes of *dakwah* programmes on TV, the producers and preachers mostly discuss them before the shooting session. The preachers often choose themes based on the guidelines from the producers, who ask for basic Islamic knowledge, nothing too philosophical or controversial, for ordinary Muslims. The themes like the miracles of *Dhuha* prayer[28] or how to be a good Muslim woman are staples. Rahman suggests that it is important to avoid philosophical topics because audience may feel bored with the content of the programmes. Content must be easily relatable and offer practical advice. Watching TV, for most people, is a means to find pleasure. Controversial topics in the programmes may cause ratings to fall and damage the reputation of the programmes among some audience.[29] In fact, some contents of *dakwah* programmes on TV, especially the session of Question and Answer (Q&A), have been heatedly debated in the society as discussed in Chapter 4. The themes of *dakwah* programmes sometimes requires an approval from the chief programme manager above

[27] Interview with Rahman, the producer of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi,* on Indosiar, Jakarta, July 29, 2016

[28] The time of Dhuha prayer is after the rise of *fajar* (dawn) and before *shalat Dzuhur* (Afternoon prayer).

[29] Interview with Rahman, the producer of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi,* on Indosiar, Jakarta, July 29, 2016.

the producers. Likewise, the format and design of the programmes, the producers also discuss them with the preachers.[30]

In some sessions of *dakwah* programmes on TV, the producers hire a famous male and female actor or comedian to enhance the entertainment value of the programmes. The preachers are chosen by the producers based on their physical appearances and popularity in their community.[31] This is discussed in more detail in the following chapter. Several producers invite several Islamic study groups to attend the programme in the studio to become the audience of the programme. In *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* in Indosiar, most of the audience are women, who come from various Islamic study groups around Jakarta. Only few men accompany them to come to the studio because the *dakwah* programmes generally target female audiences. Women often assume the role of safeguarding domestic Islamic piety. For example, we can see this kind of format in the episode of *Ujian dalam Rumah Tangga* (Domestic Challenges).[32] The categorisation of the audience will be discussed later in Chapter 4. In Q&A sessions, the studio audience can ask questions to the preachers directly through microphone provided by the team. The producers also receive questions from the preachers from the audiences outside the studio through phone, email, and video calls.

Other formats of propagation of Islam on TV introduce their themes through showing a brief documentary at the start of the show. The preacher of the programme stays to preach while the documentary is being played or after the documentary ends. In this respect, the audience only watch pictures and videos on the screen and at the same listen to the voice of the preacher. There is no Q&A session in this type of programme. One of the TV stations, which use this format is Trans7. For example, we can see this type of format in the programme of *Khalifah* on Trans7.[33] In this kind of programme, there is no audience in the studio. Most of the documentary movies played in the

[30] Interview with Rahman, the producer of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi,* on Indosiar, Jakarta, July 29, 2016.
[31] Interview with Rahman, the producer of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi,* on Indosiar, Jakarta, July 29, 2016.
[32] See Mamah dan Aa Beraksi. October 2016. "Ujian dalam Rumah Tangga [Obstacles in Family Lives]." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9JIgXFNeFHQ. Last accessed, December 4, 2016.
[33] See, for example, in Khalifah Trans7. April 2016. "Kisah Karomah Umar bin Khattab R.A. [Umar bin Khattab's Miracles]." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6NI6_ZMjqg. Last accessed, December 4, 2016.

dakwah programmes on Trans7 are made by Rodja TV. The producers of Trans7 choose and broadcast them for their *dakwah* programmes.[34]

There are also several *dakwah* programmes, which are designed following storytelling formats. In this type of programme, the preacher, the producer, and the crew member, travel to a particular place to visit Islamic heritage sites. The preacher tells the story of the place related to Islamic history to the audience. For instance, Arifin Nugroho, the preacher for *Poros Surga* (Heaven Axis) on Trans7, broadcasted *Poros Surga* from Medina in Saudi Arabia. The stories of their visit to Medina were divided into several episodes. He told the stories of some important places in Medina including the history of some mosques in Medina, grave of the Prophet Muhammad, and the food in Medina.[35] Other heritage sites that they visited include Istanbul and Bursa in Turkey, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. At these heritage sites, Arifin Nugroho repeated these same activities as in Medina.[36]

Another format is designed like a lecturing session, in which the preacher acts as a teacher, and the audience is positioned as students. He or she writes several verses of the Quran and Hadiths concerning the topic of the programme with a board marker on a whiteboard and explain them to the audience. The audience interacts with the preacher during the broadcast through telephone in Q&A session. The preacher then answers the questions of the audience.

Dakwah on TV is usually broadcast from a studio, mosque, or other locations in Jakarta or other cities in Indonesia. Most of the *dakwah* on TV are broadcast live to make the programme interactive communication between the preachers and audience. The producers sometimes broadcast the recorded version of *dakwah* because the preachers cannot attend the live programmes. The set is usually decorated with flowers, plants, paintings, and other accessories that the producers need for the broadcast. In some *dakwah* programmes, the producers also choreograph the gestures of the host and audience in the studio. They decide which colour of the costumes that the audience in the studio should wear to create uniformity and tidiness. The producers manage the format of programmes as closely as possible: they

[34] Interview with Pracoyo, the producer of *dakwah* programmes on Trans7, Jakarta, April 12, 2014.
[35] Poros Surga. April 2017. "Berkah Safar di Kota Rasul, Madinah [The Advatges of Travelling in the Prophet's City, Medina]." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7YyrxPdd4M. Last accessed, May 2, 2017.
[36] Poros Surga. May 2016. "Semua Orang Berhak Umroh [Everyone Has Right to do Umrah/Pilgrimage]." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1oof4bxCU8. Last accessed, May 2, 2017.

decide when to start, to break for advertisement, and to start again after the break. The producers and preachers discuss together which topics are suitable and how they will be addressed. They also choose which questions from the audience to be answered during the show by the preachers.

In the programme *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* on Indosiar, the creative team changes the backdrop of the stage for each broadcast, but the format remains the same. The stage is set up in a circle where the host and preacher sit in the middle surrounded by the audience (see Figure 2.2). The audience in the studio usually comprises five groups of *Majlis Ta'lim* (Islamic Learning Groups), a pedagogical model of Islam used to address Muslim men and women. More women than men attend *dakwah* programmes. The audience in the studio of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* on Indosiar sit in a line of seats like in a movie theatre (see Figure 2.2.). A crew member of the programme stands in a row used as an entrance to the studio. They direct the gestures of the audience when the opening song begins while the host and the preacher are sit patiently in the middle of the stage waiting for the song to end. Behind the host and the preacher, there is a big screen showing the main sponsor of the programme. Afterwards, the host and the preacher greet their audience. The host introduces the topic of the episode first before the preacher preach about the topic in ten minutes. After that, the host pauses the session for the advertisements before starting the Q&A session. These advertisements financially support the broadcast of *dakwah* programmes.[37]

The audience arrives one hour before the programme is due to begin. *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* opens with a theme song by Islamic band, *Qasidah an-Nabawi*, who sits amongst the audience in the studio. The band consists of five students of Institute of Quranic Studies of Jakarta. They use modern musical instruments in their performance such as piano and guitars. In *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi*, they perform an opening song, *Insya Allah*. During the song, the audience in the studio follow the producer's gestures and swing their hands left and right. The host opens the programme by standing and walking in the middle of the audience while explaining the topic for this programme using entertaining gestures and phrases. Afterwards, he gives the floor to the preacher of the show, Mamah Dedeh, to deliver her sermon for about fifteen minutes before the advertisement break. After the break, the question-and-answer section with the audience begins, followed by questions via telephone, e-mail and social media. The programme ends with a concluding remark by the preacher and a song by the Qasida an-Nabawi.

[37] Interview with one of the creative team in Indosiar, Jakarta, July 26, 2016.

The set of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* creates an eye-catching, entertaining, and visually exciting scene. The producer selects the setting based on their observation in some *majelis taklim* (regular gatherings of religious learning).[38] With the circular formation of seats, the audience is able to see each other during the show (see Figure 2.2.). The audience is usually comprised of five groups from different Women's *majelis taklim*. They dress in the same outfit, but in different colours and cover their heads with veils. The colour differences indicate to which *majelis taklim* that they belong. The members of women's *majelis taklim* usually have uniforms that they wear when they attend religious learnings. Many Women's *majelis taklim* have more than one uniform. Female audiences of *dakwah* programmes from different *majelis taklim* wear their uniforms during the broadcast.

Figure 2.2.: The Setting of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* in the Studio of Indosiar in Jakarta. Source: the official Twitter of Mamah dan Aa Beraksi

To attend the programme, the leader of the gathering of Islamic learning registers prospective members via email or telephone. The audience is not paid to attend the show. This is contrasts with some live music programmes, where the participants receive payment for their attendance. In *Mamah Aa Beraksi*, they have a long list of gatherings of Islamic learning, which are eager to attend the programme. The producer asks the participants to wear a

[38] Interview with one of the creative team members in Indosiar, Jakarta, July 26, 2016.

uniform based on their gatherings of Islamic learning and informs the producer the colour of the uniform at least a month before the broadcast. This is to avoid participants from different gatherings of Islamic learning wearing the same uniform.[39]

The women that I interviewed after the show of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* were forty-five to sixty years of age. At this age, Muslim women usually have more time to participate in social gatherings because they are no longer providing full-time childcare to their children. In his study of Islamic preaching and the participation of women in West Java, Julian Millie has observed that some women attend as many as six gatherings of Islamic learning in mosques per week. Muslim women tend to be more enthusiastic and active to participate in Islamic learning than men (Millie 2011: 155–159).

It is worth mentioning that most of the creative team members and producers involved in the production of propagation of Islam through TV are relatively young - ranging from fresh graduates to mid-career professionals. Some of them are students and lecturers from universities in Jakarta. TV professionals are dominant in the production of those programmes. Their motivation to become part of the broadcast team is to promote and propagate Islam as their religion through TV. Besides, they are paid well and happy to build a networking among media professionals. They consider the latter reasons as a reward from God for their good deeds.[40]

With the approval of TV manager, the producer is responsible for recruiting the creative team for the *dakwah* programmes. Both the creative team and the producers have to meet the requirements determined by the managers. However, a few TV companies appoint a team for *dakwah* from the professionals. They usually have experiences and been successful in making other types of TV programmes. This strategy helps TV company to minimise the production budget for their *dakwah* programmes.[41]

To stimulate the enthusiasm of the audience, the producers of propagation of Islam employ several strategies. Firstly, they ask the preachers to combine their preaching with jokes or humorous stories since comedy programmes on TV tend to receive high ratings (Hobart 2006). For example, according to several rating institutions in Indonesia, the talk show programme *Pesbukers* on ANTV obtained the highest rating in 2014.[42] The combination

[39] Interview with one of the producers from Indosiar, Jakarta, July 29, 2016.
[40] Interview with one of the crewmembers of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* from Indosiar, Jakarta, July 15, 2016.
[41] Interview with one of the producers from Indosiar, Jakarta, July 29, 2016.
[42] For more details, see Kumparan News. August 2017. "Viva Group Kuasai Rating TV

of preaching and comedy is not a new phenomenon in Indonesia. Many ordinary preachers in Muslim communities, who do not perform their preaching on TV, combine their preaching with humour. According to the producer of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi*, humour is an important part of propagation of Islam through TV shows. It has become a vital ingredient for the programmes because, according to the producer 'Indonesian people are addicted to it.'[43]

Secondly, they hire well-known actors as the hosts of the programmes. They can attract audience's attention to watch the programmes. Thirdly, it is to set it up in a format similar to reality, variety, competition or talent searching show. For example, the ratings of young preacher contest, *Pemilihan Dai Cilik* (Recruitment of Young Preachers or *Pildacil*), are so high that TVOne extent its broadcast. In this programme, young Muslims ranging from junior high school to university students register to compete to be the champion. The contestants of Pildacil come from provinces across the country. They must compete and win in the provincial level before traveling to Jakarta for the highest level. The producer of Pildacil chooses three to four judges, who consist of famous TV preachers and celebrities. The producer hires an actor or actress to judge the fashion and performance of the contestants of Pildacil, while the performance and rhetoric are assessed by the famous preachers. It is important to know that Pildacil was first broadcast on TV channel LaTivi, which was later taken over by Bakrie. After the acquisition of LaTivi channel, the new owner has since changed the name of the station from LaTivi to TVOne. Many advertising companies compete to finance this contest.[44]

Lastly, many producers prefer the preachers that they know well. The preachers might be their friends or friends of their colleagues. The producer of the programme of propagation of Islam in Indosiar affirmed that he also carefully observes the physical appearance and rhetorical skill of the candidates because they influence the attention of the audience.[45] The producers of TV channels have their own criteria and qualifications of preachers for their propagation of Islam, which is different from those

Hiburan dan Berita di Indonesia [Viva Group Dominate TV Ratings for Entertainment and News Programmes in Indonesia]." https://kumparan.com/jofie-yordan/viva-group-kuasai-rating-tv-hiburan-dan-berita-di-indonesia. Last accessed, August 29, 2017.

[43]Interview with one of the producers from Indosiar, Jakarta, July 29, 2016.

[44] Interview with the producer of Pildacil, Jakarta, January 5, 2015.

[45] Interview with one of the producers from Indosiar, Jakarta, July 29, 2016.

understood by Muslim scholars. The detailed analysis on the criteria of TV preachers will be presented in Chapter 3.

In regards to the content, the preacher decides which topic they preach about for each episode of their preaching on TV. Many preachers also have a manager, who organises and manages their activities, chooses their outfits, and recommends a list of topics for their preaching on TV. The list of topics is arranged for several episodes. Afterwards, the preachers discuss the list of topics with the producer. Most of the programmes of *dakwah* through TV shows are concerned with family matters, romantic relationships in Islam, Islamic businesses, and Islamic services. According to the producers, the topics of propagation of Islam on TV must be light, practical, and easy to understand by the audience. They avoid philosophical, debatable, and controversial topics, which can stimulate public debates and protests against the shows.[46] This evidence shows that producers want to make propagation of Islam entertaining and easily understood by a general audience. The audience should be able to immediately relate to the issues addressed by the preacher.

There is often disagreement between the public about the answers provided by preachers as answers vary over time and context. As a result, the answers given in the programmes becomes opinions, which are talked and debated by the public, rather than a solution to the question, because the preachers have different or contradictory answers. For example, in one of the episodes of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* on July 31, 2017, Mamah Dedeh was asked a question about a difficult decision faced by Muslim veterinarians when they were required to conduct surgery for animals (such as dog or pig), which are considered unclean and forbidden in Islam. Muslims must clean the part of their body, which touches the animals, based on a rigid procedure, which is determined by Islamic jurisprudence. It is important to mention that Muslim scholars have different opinions about to what extent the part of the body must be cleaned by water and how to do that. In response to this question, Mamah Dedeh suggests that Muslims should not choose to become a veterinarian because there are many options of job. Being a veterinarian can harm their services to God because God will not accept them if Muslims are not clean from the forbidden animals.[47]

[46] Interview with one of the producers from Indosiar, Jakarta, July 29, 2016.

[47] Mamah dan Aa Beraksi. July 2017. "Mertua yang Semena-mena [Parents-in Law Doing What They Like]." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9IcI3avaiQ. Last accessed, August 3, 2017.

A number of Muslims do not agree with her because Islam provides the procedure to clean the part of body if Muslims touch such animals. The answer provided by Mamah Dedeh was considered to be problematic. In response to Mamah Dedeh's answer, the Association of Indonesia Veterinarians[48] and several members of NU protested against her opinion. The NU stated their opinion that Mamah Dedeh should carefully study and research some Islamic sources before she answers questions in her propagation of Islam.[49] After the central board of the Association of Indonesia Veterinarians came to her house in Depok, Bogor in August 2017 to ask her explanation and clarification about her answer, Mamah Dedeh apologised through a video recorded by one of the members of the association in her house that she was lacking information about working as a veterinarian. She stated that she would not answer the question like that if she knew about the profession.[50] One of the members of NU argues that the controversies of the preachers' answers may happen again because some programmes of *dakwah* do not filter the questions from the audiences and the preachers do not have time to study and research before responding the questions.[51]

The following section is about the ways *dakwah* programmes on TV are remediated and circulated to the public. The remediation and circulation play an important role in to attract audiences and increase the popularity of the programmes and preachers in the society.

Remediation and circulation

Many *dakwah* programmes on TV such as *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi*, *Cahaya Hati, Indahnya Kebersamaan,* etc. are remediated through live broadcasting to create immediate experience and interaction with between the preachers

[48] For complete statement from Mamah Dedeh, see Kumparan News. August 2017. "Mamah Dedeh dan Permintaan Maafnya Soal Ceramah tentang Dokter Hewan [Mamah Dedeh and her apology about her preaching on veterinarians]." https://kumparan.com/@kumparannews/mamah-dedeh-dan-permintaan-maafnya-soal-ceramah-tentang-dokter-hewan. Last accessed, August 17, 2017.

[49] Alex Ramses. August 2017. "Surat Cinta buat Mamah Dedeh tentang Etika Berfatwa dan Dokter Hewan [(Letter to Mamah Dedeh about Ethics to issue Fatwas and Veterinarians]." https://www.nu.or.id/post/read/80107/surat-cinta-buat-mamah-dedeh-tentang-etika-berfatwa-dan-dokter-hewan. Last accessed, August 29, 2017.

[50] Bukhori Supriyadi Yadi. August 2017. "Mamah Dedeh Klarifikasi Ceramahnya yang Melarang Muslim Menjadi Dokter Hewan [Mamah Dedeh Clarifies Her Preaching about Muslims to not become Veterinarians]." https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=0G4-Z5k4eZc. Last accessed, August 10, 2017.

[51] Interview with Yahya Cholil Staquf, Jakarta, June 20, 2016.

and audiences. In some cases, there are audience who are present in the locations of the broadcasting to add lively entertaining nuance of the programmes. This helps the preachers to make the programmes more interesting than with no audiences in the locations. The preachers can interact with the audiences through greetings, questions, and humours. For example, in *Indahnya Kebersamaan*, several preachers deliver rhetorical questions just to make the broadcasting livelier and more interesting to watch and follow.

Other programmes like *Rahasia Sunnah, Khazanah, Poros Surga*, and *Khalifah*, are broadcast from Islamic historical sites that are relevant to the themes of *dakwah* programmes. In this respect, the audiences can watch the real objects, which are explained by the preachers concerning Islam in the programmes. The preachers sometimes explain some cuts of video recordings concerning people, places, or objects that are relevant to the topics of the preaching to provide live experiences for the audiences as if they were there on sites. This way of broadcasting creates hypermediacy which enhances the attractiveness of the programmes. For example, in *Khalifah* in October 2017, the preacher provided a recording video showing some touristic cities in Europe like Paris, Pisa, and Cordoba when he preached about the history of a military commander, Abdurrahman al-Ghofiqi, from Andalusia who occupied France in 732 AD.[52]

The efforts of the producers and preachers to provides live broadcasting and experiences for the audiences of the programmes are to create remediation which consists of immediacy and hypermediacy. Remediation of the programmes is important because the proliferation of digital technologies is faster than cultural, legal, or educational institutions (Bolter 1999: 4-5). TV company should compete with social media to give live events. It is why remediation become an important part for the broadcasting, which supports the circulation of TV programmes.

Dakwah programmes are circulated through social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube), SMS (short message services), and WhatsApp. Many episodes of the programmes, which were broadcast on particular TV channels, are available on YouTube. The access of Internet makes it possible for audiences to watch *dakwah* at any time they want.[53]

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[52] *Khalifah*. Oktober 2017. "Syahidnya Penakluk Perancis [the Martyred Occupant of France]." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5KzGcun8Bk. Last accessed, October 30, 2017.

[53] The study of this book is confined to *dakwah* on TV. For more information about Internet in Indonesia, see David T. Hill and Khrisna Sen. 2005. *The Internet in Indonesia's New Democracy*. New York: Routledge.

Shows are uploaded after being broadcast on TV. For example, recent episodes of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* are available on the Indosiar's YouTube account.[54] Several viewers voluntarily record the programme and then upload them to their personal YouTube accounts. Besides, many TV preachers also post summaries of their preaching on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Several TV preachers also have their managers post the summaries. The Internet has enabled dakwah programmes to reach a broad audience, beyond national borders and at any time. Indonesian Muslims abroad now have access to these programmes. They can watch the programmes anytime they want. The producer of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* suggests that the intention of uploading the programmes to social media is to spread the messages of the programmes to broader audience and Muslims should take advantage of technologies such as the Internet. 'There are not enough viewers on YouTube for the programme to make profit from it.' It is just the mission of Islam.[55] Indeed, it does not make profit but it rises the popularity of the programme and preacher. In this respect, only the broadcasting version on TV is profitable.

One of the TV preachers, Yusuf Mansur, even used SMS to remediate and circulate his preaching via mobile phones. The programme was named SMS advice (*tausiyah*) and was popular between 2010 and 2013. Yusuf Mansur signed a contract with the national mobile phone operator, Telkomsel for this programme. Yusuf Mansur and the provider earned a profit from this programme because Muslims needed to pay a subscription to access the programme. Muslims could easily subscribe to get daily SMS advice or ask questions about religious matters from and to the preachers. Muslims, who subscribed to this network, received Islamic advice from the preachers three times a day: in the morning at ten o'clock, in the afternoon at one o'clock, and in the evening at nine o'clock. The preacher usually asked their assistants to provide and compile Islamic advice for this programme and gave it to the operator of Telkomsel. These assistants also helped the preacher to answer questions from the subscribers of the programme.[56]

In an interview with one of the assistants of Yusuf Mansur, Nurman, in Tangerang in 2015, he stated that it was difficult for Yusuf Mansur to handle this programme alone and therefore he needed other people to help him.

[54] *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi*. September 2017. "Hidupku Dibiayai Suami Orang [My Life is Financed by Other's Husband]." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TH9up_mrsMI. Last accessed, September 4, 2017.
[55] Interview with Rahman, Jakarta, January 11, 2015.
[56] Interview with Bisri, Tangerang, June 22, 2016.

Yusuf Mansur usually asked one of the teachers from his Islamic boarding school like him to help run the programme.[57] Nurman works as a tutor at Yusuf Mansur's Islamic boarding school *Darul Quran* in Tangerang. Most of the contents of the SMS advice are derived from what was delivered by Yusuf Mansur in the programme of propagation of Islam *Cahaya Hati* on ANTEVE. The messages are remediated and circulated through mobile phones. For example, the SMS from Mansur would be delivered in the morning every day to people, who use mobile phone card under Telkomsel as a provider. The messages would be short because of the limitation of character on the phone. Subscribers were able to reply to ask questions. The preacher or one of his assistants would answer some of the questions. The preacher received the profit from this remediation and circulation of their preaching. The manager of Yusuf Mansur, Alfan, suggested that the intention of using a mobile phone to spread Islamic messages was to bring the preacher closer to their audience. Through SMS, the audience can get a direct answer to their questions.[58]

The performances of the preachers on TV are also recorded and remediated by the producers onto CDs, VCDs, and DVDs, which are then sold in supermarkets, markets, shops, and streets with other popular products such as music and movies in big cities like Jakarta and Medan (see Figure 2.3.). Many CDs, VCDs, and DVDs are also pirated and sold at lower prices than the original versions. Although it is forbidden by law in Indonesia, piracy of music, film, computer programmes, and so forth is a common picture. Pirated material is available physically on CDs, and also digitally on websites where viewers can watch what they search for free of charge or low price. The price difference between legal and illegal copies of CDs, VCDs, and DVDs is significant, with an illegal copy costing only 0.5 USD compared to a legal copy which costs around 3 USD.[59]

In this regard, the broadcast of *dakwah* on TV are not different. The performances of TV preachers can be pirated by anyone, who considers doing so to be profitable economically or religiously. Many recordings of the programmes are readily available, either uploaded to social media (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter etc.) They are spread by TV channels or by other people interested in sharing their preaching via their social media accounts. Therefore, it is easy for people to copy them onto CDs, VCDs, and DVDs. Indonesia has a strict regulation about piracy. Yet, implementation of these

[57] Interview with Nurman, Tangerang, June 20, 2016.
[58] Interview with Alfan, Tangerang, June 20, 2016.
[59] Interview with a seller of pirated CDs, VCDs, and DVDs, Jakarta, January 14, 2015.

stringent policies is hard to enforce. In regards to the illegal copies of the *dakwah* programmes through TV, a shopkeeper in Medan stated that she did not know from where the owner of the shop obtains the pirated CDs, VCDs, and DVDs. She stated that she only knows that he comes to the shop to bring new ones twice a week. He brings foreign music and movies more often than Indonesian media, because it is easier to pirate them. It takes months to get Indonesian films on VCDs, or DVDs after they are screened in theatre. The owner of the shop very seldom brings new pirated programmes of propagation of Islam through TV because they sell at lower number than other pirated material.[60]

Figure 2.3.: A shopkeeper in Medan shows a DVD containing the sermons from several TV preachers. Source: the author

The recorded *dakwah* version on TV in the forms of CDs, VCDs, or DVDs in Indonesia and other parts of the Muslim world is a common phenomenon. As stated in his study on the use of recorded propagation of Islam in audiocassettes in Egypt in the 1990s, Hirschkind (2006) found that the

[60] Interview with Lilik Hasibuan, December 15, 2014.

recordings played an important role in strengthening the will of listeners to continue listening to sermons and recitations of the Quran by popular preachers. Muslims played these recordings on public transportation, mosques, homes and offices. The contents of the sermons consisted of discourses on Islam, modernity, and politics. In this instance, it is the preachers themselves that recorded their sermons into cassettes (Hirschkind 2006).

In Indonesia, in the 1990s, it was easy and affordable for Muslims to buy audiocassettes of famous preachers like Zainuddin MZ (1952–2011) at street stalls and in shops. Zainuddin MZ was a preacher, who was well-known as *Dai berjuta umat* (the preacher with millions of followers). He became popular in the country through recordings before he preached in radio and TV stations. His popularity encouraged him to become the member of one of the political parties in Indonesia, PPP in 1977-1982 (Hadi et. al. 1994). In Indonesia, during my stay on the field I heard the cassettes of the recordings were played in mosques each time before the call to prayers, at homes in the morning after Morning Prayer, or in the afternoon before *Maghrib* prayer. I found that these cassettes were played on public transportation to entertain the passengers, in schools before the learning activities start, or in offices during break time.

The managers of the preachers sometimes record the sermons outside of TV broadcast times. For example, the manager of Mamah Dedeh recorded her sermon in 2014 when she preached in the city of Belitung after being invited to do so by the mayor of the city. He then copied the recording onto VCDs and DVDs to offer them to distributors to buy and sell them. The recordings are also important to play for the programme when a preacher is too ill to perform. The producer will play one of the recordings that the preacher has for his programme.[61]

In Bali, I found that it is difficult to see or buy the recordings of *dakwah* programmes on TV in markets and shops because the majority of the population are Hindu. Besides, one of the Muslim sellers of VCDs and DVDs asserted that, after the Bali bombings of 2002, tensions between Muslims and Hindus increased. This led to a decline of *dakwah* in public places. Muslims preferred to conduct such activities in mosques and their homes.[62]

Indeed, the preachers take advantage of the circulation of pirated VCDs and DVDs. Firstly, the recordings are one of the ways to increase the

[61] Interview with the manager of Mamah Dedeh, Depok, January 13, 2015.
[62] Interview with Supeno, Denpasar, February 2, 2015.

popularity of the programmes and preachers amongst national audience. This stimulates many Muslim communities to invite the preachers to preach in various districts in the country. Secondly, the circulation of preachers' VCDs and DVDs strengthen their position in society as religious leaders. Evidence of their importance can be seen from their participation in religious discussions and meetings concerning Muslim communities organised by the government. For example, in April 2017, popular TV preachers such as Yusuf Mansur and Arifin Ilham were invited by President Joko Widodo to the *Istana Merdeka* (Independence Palace) to discuss various matters concerning Muslim communities. Other participants included the chairman of MUI, Ma'ruf Amin and the minister of religious affairs, Lukman Hakim Syaifuddin.[63] This meeting indicates TV preachers' prominent and influential positions in the society to persuade their audiences in terms of religion and politics.

To summarise, it is clear that besides the broadcasts transmitted widely to several districts in the country, the programmes of *dakwah* on TV are also remediated and circulated via social media, SMS on mobile phones, VCDs and DVDs. This remediation and circulation form the TV preachers' charisma and strengthen the influence and position of preachers in the society as religious teachers or leaders to whom Indonesian Muslims seek answers and advice for religious, economic, and socio-political matters of their lives. In this respect, *dakwah* programmes on TV emerge as sources of religious authority, which are provided for Indonesian Muslims. This emergent religious authority through routine broadcast on TV challenges established authorities such as NU, Muhammadiyah.

Shaping charisma through daily broadcast of *dakwah*

As mentioned in Chapter 1, religious authority is 'local, popular, and customary' (Turner 2007: 120). These three characteristics of religious authority are established through charisma and leadership which will be discussed in Chapter 3. As mentioned in the theoretical framework of this book, charisma can be formed through repetitive forms of learning (Turner 2007: 118) by providing advice for Muslim communities. Likewise, the

[63] For more information about the meeting, see Rakhmatulloh. April 2017. "Jokowi Undang Yusuf Mansur, Arifin Ilham, hingga Mahfudz MD ke Istana [Jokowi invites Yusuf Mansur, Arifin Ilham, and Mahfud MD to State Palace]." https://nasional.sindonews.com/read/1197830/15/jokowi-undang-yusuf-mansur-arifin-ilham-hingga-mahfud-md-ke-istana-1492421639. Last accessed, August 1, 2017.

broadcast of *dakwah* on TV provides advice and answers for the audiences regarding their religious, cultural, and socio-political matters on daily basis. It is designed in repetitive forms of learning because the same formats of *dakwah* programmes are broadcast routinely everyday with the same preachers. This situation constructs the charisma of TV preachers among their audiences. Many Muslims in Indonesia consider the preachers, who preach on TV, as legitimate as Muslim leaders from the Muslim organisations such as MUI, NU, and Muhammadiyah in the society. This is obvious by observing the relationship between TV preachers and their audiences, and daily appearances of the preachers in the broadcast turn them into charismatic leaders among Muslim communities. I will demonstrate this by means of three cases in Jakarta and Medan.

Arin, a 30 years old shop owner in South Jakarta prefers to watch *dakwah* programme on TV, which is led by Mamah Dedeh. She considers what Mamah Dedeh offers to suit her need in seeking religious values for her life as a wife and a mother of two children. She admits that she follows the advice from Mamah Dedeh to deal with her family and religious matters. She regards Mamah Dedeh as a humble and pious Muslim teacher because she does not assume the status of a celebrity. According to Arin, Mamah Dedeh devotes her life for propagation of Islam and to call Muslims to improve their piety and morality.[64] Arin emphasises her assessment and preferences of preachers on their Islamic knowledge and pious behaviour. She is aware that *dakwah* programmes on TV are cultural products provided by TV industry for the public and to make profits for the producers and preachers. When asked about other TV preachers, she states that Mamah Dedeh is not the only preacher with Islamic knowledge and modest behaviour but she prefers Mamah Dedeh to others. She cannot explain the reason clearly why she prefers Mamah Dedeh to other preachers. Arin says it is just based on a feeling.[65]

In Medan, North Sumatera, I met Arif, a 20-year-old university student in 2015. He had come to my brother's dormitory room to sit together with my brother to discuss his assignment from his lecturer. Having known that I was doing my fieldwork in the city of Medan, my brother introduced him to me. Apparently, he was following popular TV preacher on TVOne, Yusuf Mansur. He stated that he watched Yusuf Mansur's *dakwah* programmes on TVOne and some occasions in other TV channels. He even became a

[64] Interview with Arin, Jakarta, November 3, 2014.
[65] Interview with Arin, Jakarta, November 3, 2014.

distributor of one of Yusuf Mansur's products, PayTren, in Medan.[66] I interviewed him why he preferred Yusuf Mansur's *dakwah* programmes to others. Arif explained that Yusuf Mansur's *dakwah* combine business with religious advice at the same time. Arif continued his explanation that indeed to be pious and rich is taught in Islam because the Prophet Muhammad was also rich and pious. What Arif likes the most from Yusuf Mansur is his personal qualities: although Yusuf Mansur is rich and pious, he is humble and speaks 'the truth', especially about the impacts of almsgiving to the success of Muslims' live.[67] To Arif and other followers of Yusuf Mansur in the cities of Medan and Jakarta, Yusuf Mansur's humbleness, piety, devotion, and oratorical skills establish his charisma as a religious leader. To them, the fact that Yusuf Mansur never claimed his role as a religious leader is proof of his modesty. In fact, Yusuf Mansur never rejects this role either when his followers attribute it to him. This evidence is similar to the case of the Muslim movement *Ansar Dine* and its charismatic leader Sharif Haidara in urban Mali. In his study, Haidara gains his charisma from the members of *Ansar Dine* through the everyday radio broadcast and audio-cassettes of his preaching (Schulz 2003: 160).

Irwan, a 29 years old outsourcing staff in the governor office of Jakarta, watches *Damai Indonesiaku* on TVOne. He is a graduate from an Islamic university. He argues that the preachers of *Damai Indonesiaku* have better knowledge of Islam than other preachers in other TV stations. He claims that the producer of the programme is trained in Islamic boarding school so that he can choose qualified preachers in Islamic knowledge for his *dakwah* programme.[68] Several preachers of *Damai Indonesiaku* on TVone become preachers on other TV channels. For example, Yusuf Mansur and Arifin Ilham are the preachers of *dakwah* programmes on SCTV and MNCTV, but they also preach in *Damai Indonesiaku* on TVone.

We can conclude that the charisma of TV preachers is constructed through daily appearances on TV where audiences seek religious advice from TV preachers in the *dakwah* programmes. These daily appearances are

[66] For futher discussion of PayTren and its controversies, see Amalia Qishtyana Amsha. October 2017. "5 Fakta Bisnis Paytren Yusuf Mansur yang Dibekukan BI, Perputaran Uang sampai Konsep Syariah [5 Facts of Paytren Corporate of Yusuf Mansur, which is Blocked by Indonesian Central Bank, from Money Circulation to Sharia Concept]." https://www.tribunnews.com/nasional/2017/10/06/5-fakta-bisnis-paytren-yusuf-mansur-yang-dibekukan-bi-perputaran-uang-sampai-konsep-syariah. Last accessed, November 26, 2019.

[67] Interview with Arif, Medan, January 22, 2015.

[68] Interview with Irwan, Jakarta, October 5, 2014.

understood as ‘repetitive forms of learning’ as explained earlier. TV preachers establish their legitimacy of religious expertise through routine broadcasts on TV. Through these routine appearances, they construct their charisma, one of the concepts of religious authority, to become Muslim scholars. Although the audiences may disagree with the preachers’ advice or opinion, which are delivered in their *dakwah* programmes, the audience will acknowledge the preachers’ charisma as Muslim scholars. Some audiences listen and follow their religious advice. Their charisma is constructed among the audiences after they watch and listen to the preachers’ sermons several times. In this respect, TV has an important role in disseminating the preachers’ charisma and advice to broad audiences.

Between commodity and public piety

In this section, I elucidate the purposes of the TV broadcast of *dakwah*. An increase in its production in Indonesia at the beginning of the 21st century has raised several questions including why does many private TV channels broadcast such programmes? One possible hypothesis was that a private TV company broadcast the programmes primarily to earn profit from advertisement revenues because of the marketability of the programmes in the rise of the visibility of Islam in Indonesian public sphere. On the other hand, the TV preachers are willing to preach on these stations as a means of spreading their Islamic ideas, messages, and propaganda. They intend to improve Muslim public piety. However, such a theory may be oversimplifying the reality of the situation, because although they have an agenda to promote public piety, the preachers also receive a high salary from the broadcast of the programmes. In this respect, I found that the broadcast of propagation of Islam indicates a contestation between the intentions of commodification of Islam and an intensification of public piety. It means that Islam is negotiated with economic profit. In several cases of the TV broadcast of *dakwah*, Islam takes precedence over commercialism, while in other decisions, commercial interests are prioritised over Islamic values.

When I visited Mansur at his boarding school, Darul Quran, in 2015, Yusuf Mansur introduced me to Ardi, one of the producers of entertainment programmes from RCTI, who had come to discuss the TV broadcast contract with him during Ramadan. I witnessed how Yusuf Mansur explained his preferences and criteria for this programme. He criticised the producer of his previous broadcast of his *dakwah* programme in other TV station because some conditions of his *dakwah* performance were not fulfilled. He prefers a

variety of broadcasting formats such as classroom session in his boarding school. When asked about how important his preferences and criteria were, Yusuf Mansur stated firmly that they are vital, because every TV preacher has their preferences and methods to improve their *dakwah*. He explained that his goal was to spread the spirit of reading the Quran by heart. His target is to have a million Indonesian students, who can master to read the Quran by heart in the period of learning process of five years.[69]

After listening to Yusuf Mansur's preferences of the Ramadan programme, Ardi agreed with all his requests and then gave Yusuf Mansur an advance payment for his broadcast contract. I saw him gave the advance cash payment while saying to Yusuf Mansur 'here is the advance money as our almsgiving for your boarding school, the rest will be transferred to your bank account after you sign the contract.' When I interviewed him in his office, Ardi explained that the duration of the contract varies as well as the payment for the preacher. He refused to mention how much he paid for Yusuf Mansur's programme in Ramadan in 2015. However, he mentioned that in general the TV preachers usually receive one to three billion Indonesian rupiahs or around 213 thousand US dollars for the duration of one-year broadcasting contract. The amount depends on their popularity. According to him, they receive more when they preach based on the invitation from government institutions, industrial companies, and Muslim communities.[70] This fee is more than the salary of Indonesian president, who receives around 62 million a month.[71] I asked about the source of the money to pay the preachers. Ardi asserts that it comes from advertisement revenue and therefore the popularity of the preachers is important to persuade and offer to advert companies (see Figure 2.4.). The more popular the preachers are, the more adverts fund the programmes.[72] I further asked whether other TV stations also depend on advertisement to broadcast *dakwah* programmes or not. Ardi confirms that he believes other commercial TV channels use the same approach because producers have goals and targeted profit to earn from their programmes.[73]

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[69] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 23, 2014.
[70] Interview with Ardi, the producer of the Ramadan programmes, Jakarta, October 30, 2014.
[71] Istman MP. June 2017. "Dikabarkan Naik, Berapa Gaji Presiden Sekarang? [How Much President's Salary Now?]" [https://nasional.tempo.co/read/887667/dikabarkan-naik-berapa-gaji-presiden-jokowi-sekarang. Last accessed, September 2, 2017.
[72] Interview with Ardi, the producer of the Ramadan programmes, Jakarta, October 30, 2014.
[73] Interview with Ardi, the producer of the Ramadan programmes, Jakarta, October 30, 2014.

Figure 2.4. Yusuf Mansur delivering a sermon during a weekly *dakwah* programme, *Damai Indonesiaku*, on TVOne. Taken from YouTube by author.

When I asked Yusuf Mansur about the payment of TV broadcast, he explains that most of the money that he receives from his *dakwah* activities is donated to his Islamic boarding schools from all over the country. He also spends the money for the broadcast of his *dakwah* on local TV in several cities in Indonesia. He mentions that he needs at least three billion rupiah to broadcast his programme of propagation of Islam in one of the local TV stations in Semarang, Central Java. He argues that the local TV stations cannot pay his programme. Therefore, his motivation of making such programme is only for the betterment of Muslim communities in the country. Beside his programme of reading the Quran by heart, he expects that Muslims in Indonesia can dominate the economic advancement by owning hotels, universities, restaurants, and so forth.[74]

I found that making *dakwah* programmes on local TV stations is financially profitable for Yusuf Mansur and other popular TV preachers. The objective of local broadcast is to expand his businesses including building several branches of Islamic schools, clinics, and hotels in several cities in the country. His popularity on TV attracts Muslims to send their children to his

[74] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 24, 2014.

boarding school or to come to his clinics and hotels. The detailed analysis of his style and his salary will be discussed in Chapter 1.

Ardi, the producer of the programme during Ramadan for Yusuf Mansur suggested that they broadcast *dakwah* programme because it is not uncommon among Muslim communities in Indonesia. During the fasting month Ramadan, TV stations compete to produce good *dakwah* programmes that are entertaining and educating. According to the producer, the main purpose of the broadcasting is to improve Muslims' piety. They explain that the degradation of morality causes Indonesia struggle to compete with other countries in terms of economy and sciences. Ardi states that due to a 'decline in morality', Muslims are behaving in a sinful manner. Therefore, they expect that the daily broadcast of propagation of Islam can improve the piety of Indonesian Muslims.[75] Moral degradation can be in the forms of free sex, drugs, and corruption, others with poverty, public disorder, and chaos in the governmental system. One point that he considers certain is that these problems of morality result in a vast divide between the rich and the poor.[76] It means that it creates in equality in terms of wealth and opportunity for a better life.

All of the preachers involved in the production of propagation of Islam through TV share similar opinions on the issue of moral degradation. They appreciate the TV industries' help to overcome these problems. For example, Mamah Dedeh claims that TV stations help to solve the nation's problems of morality by their willingness to broadcast propagation of Islam through their TV. She further suggests that her audience is nation-wide, not limited in Jakarta, due to her *dakwah* programme on TV. She expects that her propagation of Islam can improve Muslims' piety and help the country to solve the moral degradation crisis.[77]

Moreover, one of the Salafi preachers on Trans7, Badrussalam, argues that the broadcast of *dakwah* programmes is a pivotal part of Islamic movement to improve the misleading practices of Islam. In his opinion, the majority of Muslims are misguided in their Islamic rituals, which have been infiltrated by mysticism. These rituals include making pilgrimages to the graves of popular saints, making prayers in particular days after the death, and so forth. Many Muslims in Indonesia practice these activities which are also generally endorsed byNU. Thus, the Salafi preachers invite them to

[75] Interview with Ardi, Jakarta, October 25, 2014.
[76] Interview with Kurniawan, Jakarta, October 25, 2014.
[77] Interview with Dedeh Rosidah, Jakarta, January 10, 2015.

return to their idea of 'the true Islam' by returning to the Quran and the prophetic traditions. On many occasions, their *dakwah* has caused controversies and debates among Muslims because they often criticise other Muslims' rituals and doctrines, particularly those of NU. Of the controversies is the recitation of the first chapter of the Quran, which is used by NU followers to heal illness or to eradicate diseases. Muslims in Indonesia conducted this practice because they believe in the miracle of God from the verses of the chapter.[78] The debates on Islamic practices between Salafi preachers and Muslim organisations such as NU and FPI will be discussed in Chapter 4. There are various Muslim organisations, which are pro and against such rituals as the visit and prayer in graveyard and so on. In this case, NU and FPI are supportive of such rituals while Muhammadiyah and Persis, together with Salafi preachers, are against them. Further discussion about Salafi preaching on TV is in Chapter 4.

The stated intention of *dakwah* is to increase the piety of Indonesian Muslim audiences. This aim is broadly supported by Muslim organisations. The chairman of NU, Said Aqil Siroj, suggested that TV preachers should promote the essence of Islamic teaching, which comprises of peace and tolerance as a manifestation of Muslims' piety and religiosity. Being a Muslim is not only about fulfilling ritual duties such as prayer and fasting, but also having a good relationship between fellow Muslims and non-Muslims.[79] When asked about his opinion on *dakwah* on TV in his office, the chairman of Muhammadiyah and MUI, Din Syamsuddin, supported the broadcast because he believes that the methods of *dakwah* develop and are adapted to the advancement of technology of communication. He argues that when radio arrived in Indonesia, Muslims used it for *dakwah*, just as now prearchers are using the TV and Internet. However, he says that the contents of *dakwah* programmes on commercial TV channels should be more educative for audience than just providing humour.[80] Their criticism of *dakwah* on TV focuses on the preachers and content. According to their opinion, humour still dominates most of the content of the propagation of Islam through TV. They also assert that most TV preachers have limited Islamic knowledge so that the content of the propagation of Islam only discusses practical matters, not until the essence of Islamic teaching.

[78] Interview with one of the members of the central board of NU, Jakarta, January 15, 2015.
[79] Interview with Said Aqil Siroj, Jakarta, October 12, 2014.
[80] Interview with Din Syamsuddin, Jakarta, October 10, 2014.

Both the preachers and producers of *dakwah* programmes on TV intend to improve Muslims' understanding and practices. However, personal economic interests may still be of higher importance than their stated and intended purposes. Propagation of Islam has become a commodity on TV that prioritises wit and humour over Islamic content, furthermore the preachers are chosen for their appearance rather than the depth of their Islamic knowledge. The competition to attract sponsorship and the high contract-based salaries that the preachers earn, demonstrate the importance of economic interests in the broadcast. The presence of these two interests implicitly shows the way that Islam is manufactured, contested, and negotiated in all levels of social, cultural, economic, and political circumstances in the country.

The broadcast of propagation of Islam contributes to the commodification of Islam. The producer sees it as a promising commodity for Indonesian market (especially Muslim audience). Commodification of Islam is part of Islamic popular culture, which flourishes in Indonesia as well as elsewhere in the Muslim world since the beginning of the twenty-first century (Heryanto 2014 and Weintraub 2011). It is embedded in novels, movies, TV programmes and so forth. The emergence of Islamic novels and movies like *Ayat-ayat Cinta* (Verses of Love), *3 Doa 3 Cinta* (3 Wishes 3 Loves), and *Assalamu'alaikum, Beijing* (Greetings to You from Beijing), encourage TV producers and preachers to broadcast propagation of Islam through TV. The preachers see Islamic popular culture as the most effective way to disseminate the ideas of Islam, especially to younger Muslims. The products of popular culture help to carry out the mission of Islam. At the same time, the media industry sees it as a commodity for a promising market, particularly because Indonesia is home to some 200 plus Muslims.

The agendas of improving public piety and commodification seem contradictory to each other, however, in most cases the two parties have managed to negotiate these two different missions (Sakai and Fauzia, 2014). It means that *dakwah* programmes on TV can result in Islamic education by hiring preachers trained in Islamic schools and at the same time profit because the preachers are popular. Does this negotiation between religious and economic interests in the programmes of *dakwah* in Indonesia represent the secularisation of religion, in which Islam attempts to diverge from politics, and decides to track social and cultural paths? Or does it strengthen the assumption of a 'global Islamic revival' (Asad 2007) or 'conservative turn' (Bruinessen 2013: 1-20) in a new form by reinventing new methods and tools

through modern media? Only a few scholars suggest that the turning point of Indonesian politics from authoritarianism to democratisation has been dominated by Islamic visibility, and in this case by Islamic commodities. Many have speculated that Islamic parties would have succeeded in the Indonesian political arena after being politically repressed by the authoritarian government for decades. Many Muslim political leaders have kept a distance from political practices and focus their activities on Muslim communities (Porter 2002). In the era of democracy, they have failed to win the Indonesian public in political arenas at both the national and regional levels. There are several reasons that can explain this failure, two of which are money politics and the fragmentation of Islamic political parties (van Dijk and Kaptein 2016). In fact, Islamic movements have benefited from political change in the post-Suharto era (1998 onwards). They have grown and dominated the Indonesian public sphere in democratic era since the beginning of the twenty first century (Collins 2003). Many Muslim students have initiated the activities of propagation of Islam in cafeterias, university students' gatherings, and so forth (Rosyad 2006), (Heryanto 2014b). Shortly after that, propagation of Islam become a trend, which makes it appealing to media companies for economic benefit.

To better understand the meeting point between Islamic and economic interests in the production of *dakwah* on TV in Indonesia, I suggest that we view its trend from the perspective of popular culture. According to Fiske's popular culture theory, a popular cultural product (like *dakwah* performance on TV) is not produced by cultural industry, but it is created by the people. Cultural industries (such as radio and TV) manufacture a cultural product based on a trend in the society for economic return (John Fiske 1997). Before being broadcast, *dakwah* activities was disseminated by many Muslims in cities in the aftermath of the downfall of the New Order. These are conducted by young Muslim university students and businesswomen, who promoted the notions of being modest, pious, and stylish Muslims in public. Many Muslim women, modify world fashion trend with Islamic dress. They adopt new fashion trends from the West by modifying dresses and adding a light veil to meet the requirements of Islamic jurisprudence.[81] They believe their style of fashion is part of *dakwah* activities. This means that Muslims, who involve in *dakwah* activities have economic and religious motivations. In these groups, they usually discuss Islamic teachings as well as ways to build

[81] For special discussion on fashion in Indonesia, see Carla Jones. 2007. "Fashion and Faith in Urban Indonesia." *Fashion Theory 11* (2/3): 211-232.

business networks or promote their products to sell to the members of their communities and beyond. The TV industry captured this phenomenon and then brought propagation of Islam to TV.[82]

The frequency and continuation of the broadcast *dakwah* on TV for more than a decade proves that TV industry still enjoys the profit of the products. Another advantage is to fulfil the educational portion of its programmes. Many critics complaining about TV programmes are about the lack of programmes, which provide education for the audience. The *dakwah* programmes are considered to fulfil both education and entertainment programmes.[83]

Another evidence of the transformation of propagation of Islam into popular culture is that it has changed over time in terms of format and preachers. The producers have to observe a new form and preacher to avoid the audience feeling bored. Creativity in designing the programmes of *dakwah* is necessary to keep the programmes attractive and interesting for the audience. The producer of the programmes may replace a preacher with a new one because their popularity decreases, or just wants to rejuvenate the programme. The attractiveness or attitude of the preachers can also cause this replacement. For example, the producer of a TV company cancelled Aa Gym's contract and replaced him with another preacher due to the complaints by the audience and the public debate regarding his decision to partake in polygamy. His decision disappointed his audience, most of who were Muslim women.[84]

Like other popular cultural products, the broadcast of *dakwah* on TV is 'potentially open to subversive readings of the people' and may even face the resistance of the public (J. Fiske, 1992). In response to a question about his choice of the programme, Rohudin asserted that he only watches Aa Gym's preaching on TV because it touches the daily matters and heart. Further, he explains that other TV preachers have limited Islamic knowledge and understanding. Their preaching does not touch his heart even though it concerns the daily practices as a Muslim.[85] The audiences, who do not like *dakwah* programmes on national TV channels, often watch the ones in local or community TV stations. As mentioned in Chapter 1, there are some local TV channels founded by Muslim organisations and Islamic institutions which focus their programmes mainly on Islam. Such an attitude of the audience

[82] Interview with Pracoyo, Jakarta, September 25, 2014.
[83] Interview with Pracoyo, Jakarta, September 25, 2014.
[84] Interview with the producer of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi*, Jakarta,
[85] Interview with Rohudin, Jakarta, September 20, 2014.

shows us their resistance to the programmes on private TV. This audience argues that the programmes in local TV are better than those in national one because they are delivered by preachers, who are trained in Islamic schools. This evidence makes several audiences doubtful of their capability in Islamic teaching. It is significant for some Muslims to recognise the affiliation of the preachers because each Muslim organisation has different agendas in their propagation of Islam. Therefore, this provides a means by which audiences can carefully select which programme that they want to watch (further discussions about audiences can be found in Chapter 4).[86]

Another important aspect of the production of a popular commodity is financial support and profit (as mentioned above). To produce a *dakwah* programme, TV company usually either invites or receives requests from sponsorship companies. In general, there is more than one sponsorship company supporting each programme on each TV channel. The motivation behind their support is not merely business but also because it can be considered as a voluntary act of charity from the sponsorship company. The owners of the sponsorship companies believe that God will bless their business with mercies and rewards for performing a charitable act for the *dakwah* programmes through TV.[87] However, I believe that it is just a matter of profit for TV company and sponsorship companies because even the companies owned by non-Muslims like MNC TV finance *dakwah* programme. I found that many sponsorship companies are willing to finance the programmes for profit. One of the sales managers of the sponsorship companies asserts that the popularity of the programmes is one of the criteria that he should take into account in the discussion of sponsorship because he wants many audiences watch the advertisement of his company.[88] In return, the popular TV preachers and their programmes have to promote their products through advertisements based on a contract. In this respect, there is no difference between the programmes of *dakwah* and others.

Based on the discussion above, *dakwah* programmes on TV have become a commodity, which are offered to an audience. All the programmes compete to reach a broad as possible audience. The producers of modify creatively and change preachers of the programmes to persuade audience. On the other hand, popular TV preachers also compete to brand their selves to find uniqueness for their *dakwah* to capture media and audience attention.

[86] Interview with Nugraha, Jakarta, October 30, 2014.
[87] Interview with Nugraha, Jakarta, October 30, 2014.
[88] Interview with anonymous, Jakarta, November 1, 2014.

The programmes of *dakwah* on TV are produced, remediated, and circulated for profit enjoyed by all parties involved in the making from the producers, creative teams, and preachers. Economic interests erode religious missions in the negotiation between *dakwah* and profit. This is what happens when religious activism turns into a commodity.

Conclusion

The ways *dakwah* is produced on TV demonstrate the important role of TV industry in shaping the charisma of the preachers through their routine appearances in the *dakwah* programmes. This role has been underestimated in several studies concerning *dakwah* on TV focusing only on the figures of the preachers and the contents of their preaching. The charisma of *Mamah* Dedeh is formed through her daily performances in Indosiar, sermons, and direct firm answers to the questions from the audiences. Through her *dakwah* programmes in Indosiar, Indonesian Muslims see her as an authoritative figure to seek answers for religious, social, and cultural problems in Islam. Moreover, the charisma of TV preachers is enhanced by the circulation of their *dakwah* programmes through other media platforms like social media, YouTube, VCDs, and DVDs reaching various segments of audiences in the society. We can find *Mamah* Dedeh's recorded sermons in markets and stores in cities. They are played in mosques before prayers or wedding events. TV preachers' legitimacy of Islamic knowledge is established through daily production of sermons on TV and their circulation in the society.

Besides, the programme of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* in Indosiar shows the efforts of TV producers to create more attractive forms of *dakwah* for the audience with new designs and formats. The demand of interesting *dakwah* programmes on TV often results in changes in formats and preachers, which shows the competition among TV stations to produce better programmes of *dakwah.* The producers invite an actor or actress or comedian to add the attractiveness of the programmes. Attractiveness is important to invite many audiences and sponsors. Furthermore, TV stations can transform popular preachers to become national leaders whose voices are listened by a group of people. Mamah Dedeh delivers advice concerning the elections, state leadership, and justice. This indicates that she not only involves in religious discourses and debates but also in political ones.

Chapter 3

THE MAKING OF POPULAR TV PREACHERS AND THEIR ROLES IN THE SOCIETY

The previous chapter discussed the way the charisma of TV preachers is formed through routines sermons in their *dakwah* programmes. This chapter strives to answer the question of what the social and educational backgrounds of TV preachers tell us about the nature of the *dakwah* on TV in Indonesia. This question will help us to understand their roles in the making of *dakwah* programmes on TV and their popularity in the society. I analyse the background of Yusuf Mansur and discuss it with that of other TV preachers including Aa Gym and others to explore the changes and shift of the characteristics of TV preachers between 2000 to 2017. Yusuf Mansur is an important figure in the broadcast of *dakwah* on TV. He has different background of education and economic position from Aa Gym before becoming a TV preacher. His education background resembles many other TV preachers appearing on TV after Aa Gym., I will also discuss Yusuf Mansur's network to understand key factors determining the popularity of TV preachers and the transformation of his figure from preacher to leader in the country.

The landscape of popular TV preachers

During the post-New Order era (1998 onwards) popular TV preachers can be typified by three figures: Zainunddin MZ, Aa Gym, and Yusuf Mansur. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Zainuddin MZ represents the TV preachers in the New Order, who was appointed by the government to deliver his sermons on state-owned channel, TVRI. Just like him, the preachers, who appeared on TVRI, were *santri* - students who had studied Islam in traditional *pesantren* (Geertz 1960) such as Iskandar SQ and other preachers from the department of religious affairs (Muzakki 2008: 207). They also graduated from the Institute of Islamic Studies (*Institute Agama Islam Negeri*/IAIN) Jakarta. Unlike other preachers on TVRI at the time, Zainuddin MZ was popular among Muslim communities through audio-cassettes played at houses, mosques, and Islamic events. He was invited to deliver sermons all over the country (Hadi et. al. 1994). I remembered hearing to his sermons played in audio-cassette before dawn prayer in mosques in my village in North

Labuhanbatu, North Sumatera every day. His popularity encouraged him to become a politician of PPP in 1977, which was founded by Idham Chalid, the chairman of NU in 1954-1984. Zainuddin MZ studied Islam in Idham Chalid's *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) in Cipete, Jakarta (Hadi MR. et. al. 1994). In 2003, he established the Reform Star Party (*Partai Bintang Reformasi/* PBR) together with a popular *dangdut*[89] singer, Rhoma Irama (Hadi et. al. 1994 and Badjeber 2000).

The emergence of Aa Gym on TV in 2002 marked the interest of commercial TV companies to broadcast *dakwah* for their shows. Unlike the preachers before reformation, Aa Gym never studied in traditional *pesantren* or IAIN. He is known to be clever in rhetoric to use his limited knowledge of Islam acquired from a short course (*pendidikan kilat*/Diklat) in one of the *pesantrens* in West Java.[90] Before becoming TV preacher, he was popular only in Bandung where he usually teaches a group of Muslims about Islam. He established a *pesantren*, *Darut Tauhid*/DT in 1994 and MQ media company in 2002. The establishment of MQ was inspired by the enthusiasm of Muslim audience to attend his *dakwah* on TV. Afterwards, he spread his sermons through his media company, MQ in the forms of magazines, bulletins, and radio programme in addition to his *dakwah* programmes on commercial TV channels.[91]

Aa Gym became a national figure and alternative voice in Islam for Muslims in Indonesia since 2002. His sermons were spread widely through TV broadcast, MQ magazines, bulletins, and radio. He had followers all over the country including university and secondary students, who bought his sermons in the magazines and bulletins from book stores, markets, and listened to his sermons in the radio regularly. Rohuddin, a 30 years old elementary school teacher in Bogor, was one of Aa Gym's followers, who bought Aa Gym's sermons in MQ magazines when he was an Islamic senior high school student in Tasikmalaya in between 2002-2004. To him, Aa Gym was like a pop star, whom to meet was a dream. Aa Gym's easily understood sermons, rhetoric, and apparent modesty attracted Rohuddin the most regardless his lack of Islamic knowledge until his dream came to true when

[89] Dangdut is a genre of Indonesian popular traditional music partly originating from Hindustani Malay and Arabic music. For further discussion on this, see Andrew N. Weintraub (2010) *Dangdut Stories: a social and musical history of Indonesia's most popular music.* NY etc.: Oxford University Press.
[90] Interview with Rohudin, Bogor, February 20, 2015.
[91] Interview with Rohudin, Bogor, February 20, 2015.

he became an employee in Aa Gym's *pesantren*, Darut Tauhid when he was a university student in Bandung.[92]

Yusuf Mansur differs from Aa Gym because he graduated from Islamic schools and IAIN even though he never studied Islam in *pesantren*. It In terms of Islamic knowledge, Yusuf Mansur is more qualified to become a preacher than Aa Gym, but he was not popular - like Zainuddin MZ - before he appeared on TV. Yusuf Mansur appeared on TV and became popular after Aa Gym's popularity declined in 2006 because he decided to do polygamy. Both Aa Gym and Yusuf Mansur make use of media, *pesantren*, and business networks to increase their popularity and authority among national audiences. Yusuf Mansur has acknowledged that he has learned and followed some aspects of Aa Gym's model as a means to be both a successful preacher and businessman. In early 2000, when Mansur was released from prison for debt, he met several times with Aa Gym, to consult with him on spiritual matters.[93] Other preachers with similar background and popularity to Mansur include Arifin Ilham, Jefri Al-Bukhari (*ustaz gaul*/fashionable preacher), Maulana, Soleh Muhammad (Solmed), Mamah Dedeh, Badrussalam, Khalid Basalamah and Syafiq Riza Basalamah. They also have Islamic education background either from Islamic schools or *pesantren*. This evidence is against Burhani's generalisation that TV preachers lack of any Islamic education background (2020: 155). There is a change of TV preachers' education background after Aa Gym one of which is because criticism from various Muslim organisations concerning the education qualification for TV preachers.

The popular *reformasi* era TV preachers are addressed using Indonesian or Arabic appellations. The title, *ustaz* (teacher), is common but there are others such as *Mamah* (mum), *Bunda* (mother), and *Aa* (elder brother) and *Buya* (father). According to Yusuf Mansur, the appellations are made to make it easier for new audiences to remember their names. These appellations are also used to make the relationship between the preachers and audiences informal and casual.[94] Arabic appellation, *ustaz* or *ustazah*, is also used by students in *pesantren* and formal Islamic schools, *madrasah*, to call their teachers even though their teachers do not preach in the society.

The relevance of having a background in Islamic education has become central in the discussion to become a TV preacher in Indonesia since Aa Gym

[92] Interview with Rohuddin, Bogor, February 20, 2015.
[93] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, March 5, 2015.
[94] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, March 5, 2015.

became popular on commercial TV channels in 2002. According to scholars from NU, Muhammadiyah, and MUI, TV preachers have to gain legitimacy by training in Islamic schools to be qualified to give advice for the audiences concerning religious and social issues. They are, to certain extent, a source of authority for Muslim communities. According to Siradj, Lack of Islamic knowledge amongst TV preachers can mislead the audience in understanding the teachings of Islam.[95] This opinion has become the main criticism to the broadcast of *dakwah* programmes on TV.

The three figures discussed above - Zainuddin MZ, Aa Gym, and Yusuf Mansur - show us a changing trend of TV preachers in Indonesia. It is only Zainuddin MZ who has not had a regular dakwah programme in the *reformasi* era. The appearance of Yusuf Mansur on TV suggests an increase in standards of requirements for becoming a TV-based preacher. Other preachers, who appeared after Aa Gym, like Arifin Ilham, Jefri Al-Bukhori, Maulana, Yahya Zainul Ma'arif, Adi Hidayat, Dede Rosyidah, Maulana, and others studied Islam in *pesantren, madrasah,* and even in Islamic universities in Indonesia and the Middle East like in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Yemen. It is not difficult for TV companies to find qualified preachers in Islamic knowledge since there are many preachers in Muslim communities, who graduated from *pesantren* and Islamic universities.

The figure of the TV preacher in the *reformasi* era: The case of Yusuf Mansur

Yusuf Mansur is an example to explore common processes and strategies used to become a successful television preacher. Many popular television preachers present their professions as being a miraculous journey in their lives. They re-tell their life story in their preaching in many occasions. This is one of the strategies that they use to capture the attention of the audiences and to help audiences identify with them. Another strategy is to own modern *pesantren* or institutions, which feature integrated religious and secular subjects. In the case of Yusuf Mansur, the foundation including the *pesantren* is specialised in training students to read the Quran by heart and has formal secondary school. The popularity of Yusuf Mansur through his *dakwah* programmes on TV helps to develop his *pesantren* many Muslim parents send their children to the *pesantren* because they listen to Yusuf Mansur's sermons of the advantages of being a Muslim, who can read the Quran by heart and

[95] Interview with the chairman of NU, Said Aqil Siradj, Jakarta, April 10, 2015.

trust him to guide their children. It is common that television preachers have already established several learning groups of Islam in their communities before they are invited to preach on television. In these learning groups, they deliver sermons regularly. They usually have loyal followers, who always attend their sermons in the communities. In addition to these learning groups, they are sometimes invited to preach to other learning groups in other communities. These activities may take place in mosques, offices or at the buildings of large companies.

Yusuf Mansur was born in Jakarta in 1976 to a recently divorced mother. Yusuf was brought up by his uncle, Sanusi Hasan, who worked at the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Yusuf Mansur, under the guidance of his uncle, was a diligent and smart pupil. With the education from his uncle, young Yusuf Mansur won the competitions of Quranic recitation and preaching in national level. His achievement did not surprise some people living around his home because they know his grandfather was also a preacher and teacher. In spite of these achievements, Sanusi did not send him to Islamic boarding school. Instead, he was sent to a formal Islamic school and IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah in Jakarta. He dropped out of university after becoming more interested in motocross and computer business (Junaedi 2014: 8–12).

According to Yusuf Mansur, it was work in a computer business that led him to become a preacher. The story began when he was a student at *Institut Agama Islam Negeri* (State Institute of Islamic Studies or IAIN) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. In his second year, he was interested to start a business in the field of information technology. Due to a lack of experience, the business went bankrupt, which left him with a huge debt. As he was unable to pay off the debt, he was jailed twice: in 1996 and 1998. He states that during his time in jail he obtained guidance from God to perform almsgiving. Although he was in jail, he asked his wife to give the rest of their wealth to the poor and tried a new business by *jualan bakso* (selling meatball) near his house even though he was bankrupt (Yayan 2013: 28–34).

After being released from jail, Yusuf Mansur attended many Islamic learning groups in mosques to acquire Islamic knowledge to become a better Muslim. He studied Islamic theology and the history of the Prophet Muhammad from several preachers in Jakarta while he did not have a well-paying job. From his activities in the learning groups of Islam that he followed, he met a preacher, Basuni in one of the mosques where he led Islamic learning groups. Yusuf Mansur and Basuni started an Islamic oriented consultation service to help people address their problems. They named the

consultation as *Tazkiyah Syifa* (Sacred Healing). He began to gain followers through this consultation (Yayan 2013: 35-40). The introduction of Yusuf Mansur to audience beyond his community began with a book titled *Wisata Hati: Mencari Tuhan yang Hilang* (Tourism of the Heart: Searching for the Lost God) that was printed in three thousand copies and sold out in less than two months (see Figure 3). Although, this number is small if we compare it with the Indonesian populations, the strategy of publication is important for the preachers to maintain their visibility in public. Yusuf Mansur states that his books are for the audiences who like reading and to make his sermons easy to remember by the audiences.[96]

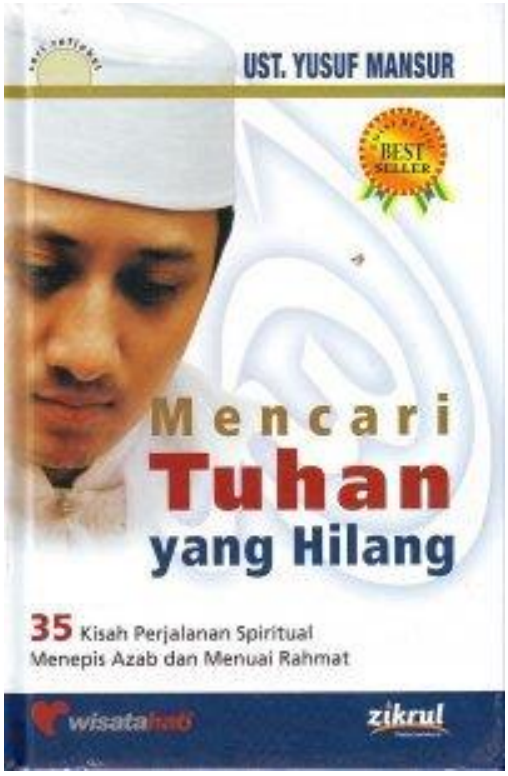

Figure 3.1.: The first book written by Yusuf Mansur, which later became the brand of his *dakwah* activities.

The book is structured as Mansur's memoirs, with a focus on the turning point of his life after he was released from jail. Yusuf Mansur asked the publisher to donate the royalties of this book to a charity. Other books written by Yusuf Mansur are *The Power of Giving*, whose content is written in Indonesia even

[96] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 5, 2014.

though the title is written in English, and *Temukan Masalah Temukan Solusinya* (Find the Problems, Find their Solutions) (Yayan 2013: 52).

Yusuf Mansur, and other television preachers like Aa Gym, Arifin Ilham, Dedeh Rosidah, already have established their own communities and networks before they appear in the *dakwah* programmes through television. Arifin Ilham, for instance, has an Islamic learning group, *Azzikra* (Remembrance of God). The success of Azzikra is founded on Ilham's skills as a preacher.[97] They also publish books based on their biographies. These books are written by themselves or with ghost-writers, who are hired to do it as part of branding exercise. Alfan explains that Yusuf Mansur and other popular television preachers do not have time to write books, so they hire their assistants to do it. They provide the guidelines of the books and read them before the publication of the books.[98] The life story of a preacher offers a reflection for the audience. It helps the audience to become involved in the life journey of a preacher. It provides attraction for the improvement of the self in religious and economic matters. Like motivators, preachers encourage audience through their personal life experience to consume their products. Moreover, preachers offer more than merely economic capital, they also offer religious capital based on the belief of the audience related to a person's 'safety in the life after death'. The preachers make the audience believe that by buying their products, the audience have donated their money in the God's path because the money is used to fund *dakwah* through schools, television programmes, and so forth. In return, it is claimed that God gives His blessings to the audience by adding their wealth and rewards that will send them to the paradise in the hereafter.

Islam for popular shows: the preacher's view

Yusuf Mansur argues that it is important for TV preachers to create special characteristics for their *dakwah* in order to become well-known by large audiences. He further explains that it requires being a professional and having expertise in a particular field. The preacher also has to have his or her own brand and promote it to new audiences.[99] Yusuf Mansur transforms his propagation of Islam into films, which are supported by prominent Indonesian actresses and actors like Dessy Ratnasari and Syahrul Gunawan. Afterwards,

[97] For more information about Azzikra, see its official website at "Majelis Az-Zikra." http://azzikra.com/tentang-kami/majelis-az-zikra/. Last accessed, December 22, 2016.
[98] Interview with Alfan, Tangerang, June 20, 2016.
[99] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 5, 2014.

collaborating with prominent production house Sinemart, Yusuf Mansur produced a series under the title *Maha Kasih* (Supreme Love), which consisted of several episodes broadcast in commercial television stations (Yayan 2013: 53).

When asked about his motivation to film his life stories and experiences, Yusuf Mansur states that the production house, *Wisata Hati*, is his effort to awake people's awareness of the importance of being close to God. It was also his effort to repent his sins in the past to God. He has found it advantageous not only religiously but also economically. He states that after he is committed to conduct propagation of Islam through popular shows, God blesses him with wealth and peace in his life.[100]

Wisata Hati and Sinemart continue to produce TV series, such as *Kasih Hati* (Love from the Heart). Yusuf Mansur's popularity among producers increased significantly through his TV series. His career as a preacher in the media began when he met Yusuf Ibrahim, the producer of Virgo Ramayana Record Company, who asked him to record his propagation of Islam on cassettes and videos. They produced its serial themes, which included *Kun Fayakun* (Be, and It is), *The Power of Giving*, and *Keluarga* (Family). His cassettes and videos of *dakwah* can be easily found in traditional markets, stores, and supermarkets in cities (Yayan, 2013, p. 53).

Mansur was invited to deliver sermons on several national private television channels. *Wisata Hati* has become his brand of *dakwah* through television. Compared with Aa Gym's *Manajemen Qolbu* (Heart Management), *Wisata Hati* provides a greater variety of themes. Yusuf Mansur believes that *dakwah* should be performed creatively and innovatively to meet the interest of audience and the development of technology. Yusuf Mansur admits that the success of Aa Gym inspired him to become 'the embodiment of the modern Muslim man: a pious preacher, shrewd entrepreneur and a doting family man.'[101] As a preacher, Yusuf Mansur refused to affiliate with Muslim organisations such as NU and Muhammadiyah, positioned himself as Muslim, who respects other Muslims and intends to improve public piety and Muslims' welfare.[102] The strategies of Yusuf Mansur's propagation of Islam consist of five pillars: (1) to perform prayers on time, (2) to perform complementary prayers, (3) to do almsgiving

[100] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 5, 2014.
[101] James B. Hoesterey. October 2016. "Sincerity, Scandal, and the State: Islam and Media in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia." https://pomeps.org/2017/01/25/sincerity-scandal-and-the-state-islam-and-media-in-post-authoritarian-indonesia/. Last accessed, December 14, 2016.
[102] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 5, 2014.

by giving money to poor people or Islamic schools, (4) to do obligatory fasting, (5) to recite and read the Quran by heart. Based on the last strategy, Yusuf Mansur launched a programme called *One Day One Ayat* (ODOA) or *One Day One Juz* (ODOJ) (Nisa 2018). I was on a bus in Jakarta when I witnessed some Muslims, most of whom are university students, recited the Quran on the bus. One of them states that she followed Yusuf Mansur's programme, ODOA, to recite at least a verse of the Quran a day. She found it very useful and gave peace in her life.[103]

In response to the questions concerning *Wisata Hati* as a brand of his *dakwah*, Yusuf Mansur explained that it is important to have attractive and innovative characteristics in *dakwah* to stimulate the enthusiasm of audience to watch and attend it. Further, he asserts that having a brand in *dakwah* does not mean to be considered better than other preachers, but to compete with other preachers. For example, Aa Gym has MQ as his brand specialising in managing the feeling of heart, Arifin Ilham with Az-Zikra specialising in the collective remembrance of God. These preachers argue that Islam is the perfect religion and that it covers all aspects of human life.

In answering the criticism of several Muslim scholars concerning profit television preachers earn from their propagation of Islam, Yusuf Mansur states that God has promised a devoted Muslim reward during his life on earth and in the hereafter if they are committed to disseminate the teachings of Islam. He argues that this is how Muslims should live; that they should be successful in practicing their religion and earning their wealth for hereafter. Therefore, the profit they get from their *dakwah* is reward from God.[104]

Although each television preacher including Yusuf Mansur has his own brand, the content of *dakwah* intersects with one another because all brands are concerned with everyday Muslim practices, family, and youth matters. Television preachers choose topics to satisfy the needs of urban Muslims seeking practical matters of their religion, which can be performed while going about their everyday life.

The construction of a kind for *dakwah* by television preachers promotes competition between the various preachers. The brands target a particular segment of the society as a market for public piety.[105] Branding or commodification of Islam is not new in the Muslim world. Islamic branding is on the rise in the West and Muslim majority countries in terms of food and

[103] Interview with Hanum, Jakarta, September 10, 2014.
[104] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 5, 2014.
[105] Interview with Wiryoutomo, Jakarta, August 3, 2014.

products with the certification of halal for Muslim customers. It ranges from food products to television programmes including propagation of Islam and movies. The rise of Islamic branding is a response of the growth of middle-class Muslims, who devote their efforts to balance the economic success with piety. The brand the television preachers build is therefore part of global trend for Muslim in the world (Shirazi 2016: 1).

The success of *dakwah* through television led Yusuf Mansur to establish Islamic enterprises and expand his schools and boarding schools to some cities in the country. He has raised large amounts of money through encouraging people to be generous with almsgiving – one of the obligations of Islamic practices. The donators mostly came from middle class Muslims. Like the audience of Yusuf Mansur, the donators came not only from around Jakarta but also from other cities in the country. The trust of these Muslims in Yusuf Mansur has shown the success of his style of *dakwah*, particularly about the miracles of almsgiving. He encouraged Muslims to donate of their wealth to the poor and weak, stating that it will never decrease due to the donation. God will double it as a reward, instead. Some amount of the money from the donators was used to establish Islamic boarding school and education institutions.[106]

Based on my fieldwork, he built the boarding school Darul Quran in Tangerang in 2005 with funding from donations. In addition to it, he established Islamic schools on the same area ranging from kindergarten to senior high school. It has an international branch, *Sekolah Darul Quran Internasional* (the International School of Darul Quran or SDQI), in 2008, which was specially addressed to middle- and upper-class Muslims, who can pay high fees to send their children to the school. The branch is intended to assist orphans financially, who studied in ordinary Darul Quran. The money he gained from SDQI was used to finance orphans who studied in Darul Quran. Yusuf Mansur also launched *Program Pembibitan Penghafal Al-Quran* (Regeneration Programme of Quran by Heart or PPPA) based on which he established *Rumah Tahfidz* (House of Quranic memorisation). This house has branches in a number of cities in all provinces too. He hired teachers to teach and guide students to read the Quran by heart. All the enterprises have been financially successful.[107]

His strategies to find relevant topics in Islam for his *dakwah* strengthen and expand his religious business and popularity in the country. In this

[106] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 5, 2014.
[107] Interview with Alfan, Tangerang, October 5, 2014.

respect, television has accelerated his success through his performances on television. He usually chooses another theme to create a new brand for his *dakwah* when the previous one declines in popularity. Many other television preachers use the same strategy to maintain their existence in the *dakwah* programmes through TV shows.

TV preachers' networking

Being a television preacher has enabled Yusuf Mansur to build networking with other preachers and enter business domain. The networking with other television preachers like Arifin Ilham and Jefri Al-Bukhori (d. 2013) enables Yusuf Mansur to broadcast his programmes of *dakwah* on television stations. He stipulates that television preachers like Arifin Ilham have always encouraged and asked other preachers that they have known well to replace them to preach. Besides his network with several producers in production houses, Yusuf Mansur's good relationship with other television preachers has made it possible for him to broadcast *Wisata Hati* in the forms of television programmes of propagation of Islam on ANTEVE.[108] The position of Yusuf Mansur is strategic because he is well known by both producers and television preachers so that his propagation of Islam is broadcast in several other television stations.

Jefri Al Bukhori is the son of a Muslim woman preacher who preached in a number of mosques and Islamic learning groups in Jakarta.[109] In general, Muslims understand the fact that familial lineage is important in creating a sense of authority as a preacher. Another example of television preacher who inherited the profession of their families is a Muslim woman television preacher Dedeh Rosyidah Syarifudin[110] (most commonly known as Mamah Dedeh) whose father was a well-known preacher and had an Islamic boarding school in Ciamis, West Java. Mamah Dedeh learned the skills of *dakwah* from her father. The status of being a descendant of preachers has advantages in terms of mass mobilisation and social stratum because their families built the audience for their propagation of Islam, who may become the followers for their next generation preachers.

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[108] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 5, 2014.

[109] The life story of Jefri Al Bukhori was filmed under the title *Hijrah Cinta* (Migration of Love). The movie was made after his death and screened in cinemas in Indonesia.

[110] For gender study on the *dakwah* programme of Mamah Dedeh, see Dicky Sofjan. 2012. "Gender Constraction in *Da'wahtainment:* A Case Study of *Hati ke Hati bersama Mamah Dedeh*" *Al-Jāmi'ah* 50 (1): 57-74.

As mentioned above, Aa Gym is exceptional. He is the son of a former mid-ranking officer in Indonesian army. Aa Gym grew up in a military housing complex in Bandung close to his present house. Although he has no relatives who were preachers, Aa Gym always tells his followers that he is grateful to be the son of a military figure because his father taught him discipline and hard work, which helped him gain his success as a business man and preacher. During his school education, Aa Gym was not a particularly bright student and also failed to pass an examination to enter a good university, yet he had a capacity of leadership learned from his father (Watson 2005: 780 and Gymnastiar 2005: 26). Rohudin, who worked for Aa Gym's *Darut Tauhid* in Bandung, states that Aa Gym is very disciplined and uses time efficiently. That is also what he demanded from all the staff in his Islamic boarding school and MQ Company. He further explains that the way of live Aa Gym has motivated him to follow his propagation of Islam in books, magazines, radios, and televisions since he was a senior high school student twelve years ago.[111]

As mentioned above, like his other fellow television preachers, Yusuf Mansur's *dakwah* has appealed to middle class Muslims, which enables him to build a business network. He is able to persuade these Muslims to invest in his schools and enterprises. He knows about this advantage. Although he has been bankrupted and has been to jail for failing to pay debts, business remains his passion. Therefore, Yusuf Mansur begins his business again by building hotels, apartments, and schools. He defines business part of propagation of Islam. He explains that *dakwah* can be conducted not only through sermons but also properties like hotels and apartments. The hotels that he aims to build aims to be Islamically inspired hotels, which facilitate Islamic trainings and accommodation for Muslims in Indonesia before going to Mecca for pilgrimage. To support his businesses and dreams, Yusuf Mansur persuades middle- and upper-class Muslims to collect funds and assets as donators from all over the archipelago and abroad. The amount of the donation is determined. Prospective donators should register via Yusuf Mansur's website by paying registration fee first.[112] Besides website, he has fan pages in social media where he remediates his sermons and promotes his programmes of almsgiving.

[111] Interview with Rohudin, Depok, Oktober 11, 2014.
[112] We can visit Yusuf Mansur's website at www.yusufmansur.com. Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 5, 2014.

Yusuf Mansur also has made a good relationship with several Muslim scholars and donators from Middle East countries, particularly from Saudi Arabia. The function of Muslim scholars from the Middle East is significant to promote his boarding school. Yusuf Mansur believes that they can make it legitimate as a place for children to study Islam because the scholars come from the place where Islam emerged. Also, many Indonesian Muslims see Muslim Scholars from the Middle East, especially from Saudi Arabia as Islamic authorities.[113] They are invited to preach and teach at *Darul Quran*. Their sermons and teachings are recorded and sometimes replayed during his *dakwah* programmes on TV (Figure 3.2.). Their sermons and teachings contain tips on how to memorise the Quran by heart. Generally, the Muslim scholars attend several events during their visits to Indonesia. For example, they give a lecture at LIPIA in Jakarta besides attending Yusuf Mansur's event in his boarding school. They play a significant role in promoting his Islamic education institutions to several stakeholders in the Middle East. Yusuf Mansur also believes that the coming of pious Muslim scholars to his Islamic boarding school has many advantages. They bring blessings from God through their prayers from the school and people in it. The blessings can be in the forms of donation and success for his institutions and career.[114] The appearance of Muslim scholars from the Middle East and Yusuf Mansur's relationship with them has increased the appeal for Muslims in Indonesia to follow his *dakwah* and send their children to his Islamic education institutions.

[113] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 5, 2014.
[114] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 5,2014.

Figure 3.2.: Yusuf Mansur (second from right) next to Syeikh Adil Al-Kalbani (wearing the red scarf)), the leader of prayers at Al-Haram Mosque in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, when he visited *Darul Qur'an* in Tangerang. Source: www.tribunnews.com.

In addition to the *dakwah*, these Muslim scholars are invited yearly to commemorate the graduation of the students who are capable of reciting the entire Quran by heart at Darul Quran. Most of the Muslim scholars that he invites to his Islamic boarding schools follow Salafi interpretations of the Quran. However, I found that they rarely discuss topics concerning Salafism because Yusuf Mansur asks them to speak about motivations to recite the Quran from memory. Yusuf Mansur states that he is not concerned with the Muslim scholars' ideology from the Middle East, he just invite them to teach the students through their experiences of how to be able to read the Quran by heart.[115] The presence of Muslim scholars from Middle East make a legitimation for parents that their children's memorisation of the Quran is approved by the imams.[116] To many Indonesian Muslims, scholars from the Middle East, particularly from Saudi Arabia are appealing because they consider them coming from the centre of Islamic authority.

Networking influences the popularity of television preachers and its institutions. They have to maintain good relationship with other preachers to share ideas, strategies, and innovations in *dakwah* through television. They also like to establish relationships with people from Middle East to show their

[115] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 5,2014.
[116] Interview with one of the parents of the student in Darul Quran, Tangerang, October 5, 2014.

strength in Islamic knowledge. Individuals and organisations in the Middle East often provide funding for the institutions of television preachers as received by Yusuf Mansur. In some cases, television preachers also create networking with government officials and business conglomerates in Indonesia. This networking is one of the reasons that television preachers become popular in media and society.

Becoming TV preacher

In terms of popularity and media exposure, it is hard to distinguish between television preachers and celebrities for two reasons. Firstly, like celebrities many television preachers involve in and become a model of the advertisements for *dakwah* and other TV programmes. They encourage the audience to buy the product in the advertisements. There are four products support Yusuf Mansur's *dakwah* in every episode on ANTV for a broadcasting contract. These products are promoted in advert sessions. In the case of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* on Indosiar channel, Mamah Dedeh is the figure used to promote the product *Tolak Angin*. She also promotes other products, which are mostly the sponsors of her programme in Indosiar. In Mamah Dedeh's *dakwah* programme, the products are not only screened in advertisement sessions but also put on the screen behind her stage and on the table in front of her (see Figure 2.2 in Chapter 2).

Secondly, their personal lives and lifestyle are exposed by the media to public through infotainment programmes. Yusuf Mansur's business companies such as syariah hotels, *pesantren*, and *Paytren*, a payment application, are promoted by TV stations in infotainment programmes to frame his success in business and *dakwah*. Mansur's family life is rarely covered by the media. He generally only seeks to promote himself as a good businessman, rather than attracting attention to his family life, like Aa Gym. Mamah Dedeh also is framed as a successful female preacher with her new luxurious house introduced in infotainment programmes. It resembles the house of a famous actor rather than that of a humble Islamic preacher.

The popularity and success of *dakwah* of TV preachers to attract public attentions coincide with the *hijrah* trend among celebrities. It is a movement among celebrities to become pious and committed to Islam by participating in forums and gatherings of studying Islam. For female celebrities, they start wearing the veil and attending Islamic forums taught by TV preachers and others. Actors grow their beard as the practice to follow the Prophet's tradition. For example, Oky Setiana Dewi, the main actress of the poplar

Islamic movie, *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* (When Love Praises God)[117] states that she wore a veil after she learned that life after death is so important and thus she decides to be more Islamic by wearing veils.

Like a celebrity, the popularity of a television preacher can be highly temporal. Afterwards, they are generally replaced by the new ones, who are considered more attractive with their appearances or contents of their sermons. Yusuf Mansur is still famous among TV channels because he cleverly changes the contents of his sermons when he feels a particular topic is not interesting to the audiences. Some of the topics he delivers are almsgiving, the miracles of the Quran, and the importance to be a rich Muslim. Ustaz Solmed is one of the preachers, who has failed to maintain his popularity because he does not have new topics when the audiences start feeling bored to what he delivers in his sermons. His popularity declines and he seldom appear on TV channels gradually. Aa Gym's popularity has declined as his image as a loyal and good-loving husband became tainted by doing polygamy.

In respect of commitment to Islam, most popular TV preachers have stories about their conversion from 'bad' to 'good' Muslims. Before becoming preachers, they experienced a 'miracle', which is a turning point to become modest and pious and perform *dakwah* as their commitment to spread Islamic teachings. This miracle can be in the forms of a dream to meet the Prophet Muhammad or a pious Muslim cleric or to receive guidance from God. Such an experience seems adequate to make them preachers even though they are not graduated from *pesantren* and have limited Islamic knowledge.

As mentioned above, Yusuf Mansur's life experience about being in jail and then getting guidance from God, which led him to turn to doing propagation of Islam and business, is common among television preachers. Many television preachers have shared similar stories, which tell public that they were a misled people, who were then committed to repent their sins by calling people to Islam. The turning point to become a preacher can also appear from a dream. For example, Aa Gym and Arifin Ilham had a dream in

[117] An Islamic movie adapted from a popular Islamic novel written by Habiburrahman El-Shirazy. For further reading about its novel, see Mohd. Zariat Abdul Rani. 2012. "Islam, Romance and Popular Taste in Indonesia: A Textual Analysis of *Ayat-ayat Cinta* by Habiburrahman El-Shirazy and *Syahadat Cinta* by Taufiqurrahman Al-Azizy." *Indonesia and the Malay World* 40 (116): 59 – 73. For further reading on Islamic movie, see James B. Hoesterey and M. Clark. 2012. "Film Islami: Gender, Piety and Pop Culture in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia." *Asian Studies Review* 36 (2): 207 – 226.

which they met the Prophet. According to their opinion, the dream was a sign to change their way of life to do propagation of Islam. Afterwards, they preach and do business in the name of *dakwah*. When people have an unfortunate or a bad experience in their lives and God still gives them time to fix it, it is a gift from Him to give them opportunities to change their lives in order to be in line with the guidance of His prophet. Moreover, if they have a dream in which they meet the prophet or a prominent Muslim scholar, it means that God mandates them to fight for the sake of propagation of Islam and good deeds. Not every Muslim can have a dream like that.[118]

Life stories, to a certain extent, supports television preachers' popularity among the Indonesian public. It also offers listeners or readers a reflection of their stories because everyone has made sins and then how to repent and do-good deeds. In the case of Yusuf Mansur, as so other television preachers, the fact that his first book about his life story was sold out in less than two months is evidence of the high interest of public.[119] On the other hand, Muslim preachers usually use the method of storytelling in *dakwah*. The stories they deliver to their audience vary from their life stories to those of the Prophet and his companions.

Before becoming TV preachers, their *dakwah* activities are confined to their communities around their residence until they meet mass media that are willing to promote the activities to broader audience. The creativity of Yusuf Mansur combined with the initiative of Zikrul Hakim publisher to publish his life story brought a success for them when his first book reaches a very high sale. It was when Yusuf Mansur began to be known by Muslims beyond his communities through his book. Moreover, his idea to screen his life experiences into film series is an entrance to appear on mainstream television stations with wider coverage than book publishers. Besides, most Indonesian people prefer to watch film to reading a book. Through the filming of his life experiences Yusuf Mansur can extend his networking to other producers, who work for television. Afterwards, Yusuf Mansur received broadcasting contracts offered by several commercial television stations to broadcast his sermons for certain periods of time. He sometimes should even refuse several contracts due to limited schedules and break to keep him healthy.[120]

Like popular actors, TV preachers also have a manager, who organise timetable of their preaching events, in some case helps selecting topics of

[118] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 6, 2014.
[119] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 6, 2014.
[120] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 6, 2014.

preaching, update their activities on fan pages of social medias, and so forth. Bisri, the manager of Yusuf Mansur, confirms that Yusuf Mansur has his own management team to help him preparing and organising his *dakwah* agendas.[121] Most of his assistants are university graduates and ever studied at Islamic boarding schools.

Some television preachers launch *dakwah* services via SMS on mobile phones and open consultation for Muslims who have questions and problems to solve. They co-operate with mobile operators to make the programmes and share profit of them. Among them Jefri al Bukhori launched Uje Centre and its programme *Obat Hati* (Medicine for the Heart) via SMS of all mobile operators in Indonesia in 2006. This programme is intended to disseminate his thoughts on Islam and to provide consultation on religious matters through which Muslims can receive fast answers. Jefri Al Bukhori stated that Uje Centre was his new religious-oriented business and thus it was not intended only for profit-oriented but also seeking rewards from God.[122]

In addition to their appearances on television stations, they make accounts on social media like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. They also publish their own websites on Internet. They usually upload the videos of their sermons and activities to these media where their followers may react and comment. They also promote and advertise their Islamic boarding schools and business companies through their social media and websites. The purpose of this is to be closer to their audiences and spread their *dakwah* because the time allocation for dakwah on television is limited, while on internet it is not. Yusuf Mansur adds that his social media accounts are followed by people who don't have time to watch his programmes on television.[123] More than six million people follow Facebook fan page of Yusuf Mansur while Aa Gym has more than five million followers. Although their followers often ask questions concerning religious matters on their fan pages, television preachers rarely answer them.

These preachers have reached their fame because of the availability of media technology, which enable them to accelerate their popularity among Muslim audiences. Their methods and strategies of propagation of Islam, which range from print to cyberspace media, capture borderless audience that is not limited to Indonesia. It shapes global communications between the

[121] Interview with Yusuf Mansur's manager, Tangerang 7, 2014.
[122] Anton. June 2006. "Uje Luncurkan Uje Centre dan SMS Obat Hati [Uje launches Uje Centre and SMS heart healing]". http://www.kapanlagi.com/showbiz/selebriti/uje-luncurkan-uje-centre-dan-sms-obat-hati-lpytiap.html. Last accessed, December 20, 2013.
[123] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tengerang, October 5, 2014.

preachers and their audience, which enable Indonesian Muslims in Hong Kong and Singapore, to follow their *dakwah* through video streaming and social media. The advantage of using the internet for *dakwah* in Indonesia is evident in the sense that Indonesia is in the sixth rank of the biggest Internet users in the world.[124]

According to the production manager of Trans7, Wiryoutomo, the audience for *dakwah* most coveted by the preachers is not television audience even though they can earn billions of rupiahs for the broadcasting contracts in a year. The real market is the opportunities to deliver sermons in front of Muslim congregation based on invitations because the television preachers can earn much more profit than those from private television channels. Some are often invited to preach abroad in front of Muslim diaspora. Therefore, it is necessary to bear in mind that the performances of preachers on television, as with other media, are a strategy to promote themselves and their products to audiences and to increase the bargaining power if an organisation or community is eager to invite them to preach. The more often they appear on television channels, the greater fee the preachers can charge.[125]

As mentioned above, the fact that preachers receive payment for their *dakwah* activities is not uncommon in Indonesia. In my village in North Sumatra, I witnessed my father, as the member of the board of the mosque, gave a payment to a preacher after he delivered his sermon in the commemoration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad when I was a child. In general, Muslim communities also understand the consequences of inviting preachers and know how much cost they need to pay according to their social status and popularity. In relation to this issue, Yusuf Mansur stipulates that if preachers receive payment from Muslim communities, it is a reward from God due to their efforts to teach them about Islam. It is a common practice in the Muslim world. Further, he admits that he never requests a specific fare for his *dakwah*.[126] The fact above implies that Muslim communities have become a market of preachers, which give economic benefits. TV preachers are perceived in a similar light to television stars or celebrities in the society. Stars (or celebreties) are created through a proliferation of media focusing on every aspect of their life (Dyer 2007: 85).

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[124] Oik Yusuf. November 2014. "Pengguna Internet Indonesia Nomor Enam Dunia [Indonesian Internet Users Rank 6th in the World). https://tekno.kompas.com/read/2014/11/24/07430087/Pengguna.Internet.Indonesia.Nomor.Enam.Dunia. Last accessed, March 4, 2015.

[125] Interview with Wiryoutomo, Jakarta, August 3, 2014.

[126] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 6, 2014.

Building on this theoretical framework we understand how media raise television preachers to become national celebrities in so many ways. They promote their *dakwah* brands, films, publish their biographies, make interviews, cover their daily habits and private lives.

The private life of television preachers is exposed by media and has become the consumption of public as that of celebrities through infotainment programmes on magazines and commercial television stations. Many authors write and film their life stories. The exposé of the private lives of television preachers based on media perspective has appeal to public, which is measured by rating and share. Solmed is the most frequent television preacher whose private life is often broadcast in infotainment programmes on commercial television channels.[127]

Television industries have shaped the preachers' images produced for public with a quite specific feature of each of them. Aa Gym is featured as a very pious Muslim, loving husband, and caring father. Yusuf Mansur is promoted as the icon of the miracles of almsgiving and a memoriser of the Quran. Jefri Al-Bukhori is well known as a fashionable preacher specialised in youth matters. These images of the preachers are formed through their everyday appearances in propagation of Islam, infotainment, celebrity talk shows, and news on television. They have become elites in the same stratum as movies stars, politicians, and the leaders of Muslim mass organisations.

Besides, their private lives become commodity, as such celebrities, to public consumed through infotainment programmes. For example, the relationship between *Ustaz* Solmed and his wife media to public exposed before marriage and even after their marriage their private lives have been uncovered through infotainment programmes. As explained in Chapter 1, the physical appearance and rhetorical skill are the main criteria to be a television preacher. It is why most television preachers are young adult and have good-looking faces. In relation to educational background and Islamic knowledge she states that most producers do not make education and knowledge of Islam priority to choose television preachers because the topics of the programmes of *dakwah* through television are usually simple an easily understood by common Muslims in urban villages. They therefore do not need a deep knowledge of Islam and a good Islamic educational background.[128] In search of television preachers, physical appearance and rhetoric remain the main criteria for television stations. According to a producer, they can recruit a

[127] Interview with Rusmitantri, Jakarta, September 7, 2014.
[128] Interview with Purnamasidhi, Jakarta, September 14, 2014.

person with no Islamic education and knowledge to preach in their programme of *dakwah* in their television stations. All the criteria are made based on the necessity of popularity for the television preachers and the programmes.[129]

The appearance of preachers on TV can be based on the invitation from producers or recruitment conducted by television stations. The necessity of the preachers for *dakwah* programmes through television reflects the similarity between television preachers and celebrities. The discussion of audience of *dakwah* programmes on television will come later in Chapter 5. It is to 'combining material success and moral connectedness is coming to be seen as the exemplary way of being a modern, moral Muslim.' (Osella & Osella 2009: 196). The fact that television preachers from around cities of Jakarta are dominant to appear on national television stations show the way that producers find them depending on their networking and that of television preachers. According to Purnamasidhi's experience as a producer, it is the easiest way to ask to a particular preacher to find several candidates of preachers for *dakwah* programmes because most preachers have connection with each other around the capital city of the country.[130]

With the help of television broadcast, the social status of television preachers as celebrities to some extent gives advantages politically in the public. Some preachers position themselves as Islamic leaders and in some cases attempt to drive their followers for their political goals. At the same time, many Muslims, who follow them, consider them to have charismatic leadership as discussed in Chapter 3. Popular television preachers involve in political and religious discourses and activities like general election and mass protests against the government's decision. The broadcast of their programmes on television elevates their status as charismatic as other leaders from Muslim organisations as I will describe in the following section.

From preaching to leadership

Television preachers' Islamic leadership to Muslim communities can be understood by focusing on their involvements in several socio-political events in the society. During the Indonesian presidential election of 2014, Yusuf Mansur had to announce his neutral position via his personal website that he did not support any presidential candidates because there were some edited

[129] Interview with Wiryoutomo, Jakarta, August 3, 2016.
[130] Interview with Purnamasidhi, Jakarta, September 14, 2014.

photos of his with the two competing candidates Joko Widodo (popularly known as Jokowi) and Prabowo spread in social media. Instead, he asked his followers to pray to God may the election would run peacefully for the sake of the unity of the nation.[131] His position in that election was different from Aa Gym's, who publicly declared and asked his followers to support Prabowo because he considered Prabowo can unify Indonesian Muslim communities.[132] Many other preachers also supported Prabowo.

When I met Yusuf Mansur and spoke about his announcement during interview in his Islamic boarding school Darut Tauhid after the election, he stated that he did not choose Jokowi because he considered Jokowi to be insufficiently pious. Moreover, he was backed by the *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan* (the Indonesia Democratic Party-Struggle or PDIP), which was regarded to support communism.[133] When I responded his answer with a question if he chose Prabowo, he just smiled without further explanation, so I turned into other questions. His smile was likely to indicate that he supported Prabowo just as Aa Gym and other television preachers. Considering the issues of piety and religiosity, which became the main discourse and debate in the election at that time, we can conclude that Yusuf Mansur supported Prabowo. There were four Islamic political parties, who supported Prabowo's presidential candidacy in 2014, which consisted of *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (the Properous Justice Party or PKS), PPP, *Partai Amanat Nasional* (National Mandate Party or PAN), and *Partai Bulan Bintang* (Crescent Star Party or PBB). Conversely, there was only one Islamic political party, *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa* (National Awakening Party or PKB), which supported Joko Widodo. These political parties are categorised as Islamic because the majority of their supporters, who are Muslims (Umam and Junaidi 2017, Yunanto and Hamid, 2013).

Yusuf Mansur and other television preachers also called upon Muslims to join the protest against the former governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama or Ahok (see Figure 5). Ahok was accused of having defamed Islam based on his statement on September 27, 2016 that Muslims should not be deceived by Muslim groups with the verse 51 of Al Maidah (5) in the Quran

[131] Yusuf Mansur. July 2014. "Tentang Pilpres [About the Presidential Election]". http://yusufmansur.com/tentang-pilpres/. Last accessed, August 28, 2014.
[132] Sabrina Asril. May 2014. "Ceramah di Masjid Aa Gym Harapkan Prabowo-Hatta Satukan Umat [Preaching in a Mosque Aa Gym Hopes Prabowo-Hatta Unify Umma]." https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2014/05/20/1452467/Ceramah.di.Masjid.Aa.Gym.Harapkan.Prabowo-Hatta.Satukan.Umat. Last accessed on August 28, 2014.
[133] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 6, 2014.

to oppose him in the Jakarta Governorship Election 2017. His statement was recorded in a video, which was manipulated and then uploaded to Facebook. The recording of the video provoked a protest against Ahok by Muslim groups like FPI. They organised several mass demonstrations demanding the government to bring Ahok's case to the court. Yusuf Mansur and other television preachers asked Muslims to come to Jakarta to join the demonstrations through television and social media.[134] Later on May 9, 2017, Ahok was sentenced to two years in prison by North Jakarta District Court after being found guilty for blasphemy and inciting violence.[135]

I asked Yusuf Mansur about his opinion concerning Ahok's statement during the interview in his house. He responded that Ahok should learn to speak politely in public. He continued to say, 'that is what I would do if I become a governor or president because young generations learn from what they watch on television or media.' Further, he confirmed that Ahok's statement about the verse 51 of Al-Maidah from the Quran was related to the divinity of the Quran and was an insult to Muslims.[136] I watched and listened the same statement on several occasions on television when he was invited by several television stations to give his opinion about Ahok's case. Yusuf Mansur's support for the mass demonstrations against Ahok were shown by his providing of mineral water for the protestors and with his involvement in one of the demonstrations.[137]

[134] Herianto Batubara. October 2016. "Aa Gym Ikut Demo Ahok 4 November: Tetap Jaga Akhlakul Karimah [Aa Gym Participating in a Rally against Ahok 4 November: Keep Good Deeds." https://news.detik.com/berita/d-3333050/aa-gym-ikut-demo-ahok-4-november-tetap-jaga-akhlakul-karimah Last accessed, December 2, 2016.
[135] Tempo. May 2017. "Ahok Dihukum 2 Tahun Penjara, GNPF-MUI Terima Keputusan Hakim [Ahok is sentenced 2 years in prison, GNPF MUI accept the judge's decision]." [https://nasional.tempo.co/read/874086/ahok-dihukum-2-tahun-penjara-gnpf-mui-terima-putusan-hakim/full&view=ok. Last accessed, January 17, 2017.
[136] Interview with Yusuf Mansur, Tangerang, October 5, 2016.
[137] Interview with one of Yusuf Mansur's assistants, Jakarta, October 25, 2016.

Figure 3.3.: Television preachers including Aa Gym (background), Arifin Ilham (background), and Bakhtiar Nasir (middle) shown in the picture of the press conference to the media in Jakarta on May 2, 2017 before their demonstration against Ahok. Source: www.tempo.co.

In the two examples above, we can see how television preachers position themselves as Muslim scholars and teachers, who give advice to Muslim community. They involve in the political arena of the country. Their significant position in the country can also be proven by the invitation from the president Jokowi in April 2017 when he asked for Muslim scholars' advice concerning the retribution of government's land. Yusuf Mansur and Arifin Ilham attended the meeting together with the representatives from MUI, NU, and Muhammadiyah. After the meeting with the president, Yusuf Mansur explained to the media that the president Jokowi asked Muslim scholars' opinion about possible cooperation with business stakeholders to cultivate the government's land asset through Islamic boarding schools.[138] The president's invitation shows recognition from the state to television preachers' leadership in the society.

Muslims in Indonesia may consider to follow television preachers' advice because each television preacher has followers, who follow their propagation of Islam on television and in social media. Purnomo, for example, one of Yusuf Mansur's followers from Jakarta stated in the interview with me that Yusuf Mansur's neutral position in the presidential

[138] Ray Jordan. April 2017. "Ini yang Dibahas Jokowi Bersama Yusuf Mansur dan Ulama di Istana [Here is What is Discussed by Jokowi with Yusuf Mansur and Muslim Scholars in State Palace]." https://news.detik.com/berita/3476847/ini-yang-dibahas-jokowi-bersama-yusuf-mansur-dan-ulama-di-istana. Last accessed, May 6, 2017.

election 2014 indicated his humbleness to call Muslims to keep the presidential campaign peaceful. Purnomo is convinced that Yusuf Mansur supported Prabowo in the election and so did he.[139] As mentioned in chapter 2, humbleness is one of the criteria of charisma. Afterwards, charisma shapes leadership of television preachers. In this respect, television preachers to certain extent have transformed their popularity through media into religious authority for Muslims in the country. This evidence will be reinforced in chapter 5 in the session of question and answer in *dakwah* programmes.

Conclusion

Yusuf Mansur's case is a distinctive figure in *dakwah* programmes in comparison with Aa Gym. The appearance of Yusuf Mansur marks a new trend in TV preachers after Aa Gym because he has an Islamic educational background. Aa Gym and other TV preachers are considered illegitimate to represent the voices of Islam in the society because they were not trained as Muslim scholars. In that respect, Yusuf Mansur is similar to the TV preachers during the New Order era including Zainuddin MZ and Iskandar SQ who were educated in Islamic schools. Like other TV preachers after reformation, Yusuf Mansur considers his life experience from being a bad Muslim to becoming a pious Muslim by becoming a preacher as a miraculous journey to attract audiences. The life experiences of the TV preachers are viewed by the audiences as a reflection of their lives to take the same journey to practice *dakwah*. Therefore, their life experiences also add their popularity on TV and in the society.

TV preachers have to find their 'brand' in Islam for their *dakwah* in order to attract audiences and become popular. Brand means an interesting topic as the centre of their preaching. Yusuf Mansur makes almsgiving and then the advantage to read the Quran by heart as his brands of preaching to raise his popularity, which leads him to become a national celebrity. Other preachers using pious family in Islam, youth in Islam, and so forth as their brands. His popularity forms his businesses and leadership among Muslim communities in the country. This leadership enables him to have followers coming from different segments of the society. His role become significant not only as a TV preacher but also Islamic leader to advice and lead Muslim communities. Yusuf Mansur enhances his legitimacy as Islamic leader by showing his connections with Muslim clerics from Saudi Arabia as the origin

[139] Interview with Purnomo, Jakarta, December 5, 2014.

of Islam. This leadership role of TV preachers in the society is evident in their involvement in political campaigns and their contribution in political debates in the elections. This evidence shows how they use *dakwah* not only for religious objectives but also political ones.

Chapter 4

CONTESTED RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY
The Case of Salafi *Dakwah*

The rise and popularity of TV-*dakwah* has gained the attention of various Muslim organisations. Some organisations, such as NU, Muhammadiyah and MUI have expressed their concerns about the quality of *dakwah* programmes due to an apparent lack of Islamic education content. In some cases, they have offered their own preachers to the TV stations. Their concerns have been heard by some TV stations, which have begun to invite the preachers from these organisations for *dakwah* programmes on their TV channels. Some concerns of the quality of *dakwah* programmes also have emerged from several producers of TV programmes. They attempt to provide better *dakwah* programmes on their TV channels, which provide stronger Islamic education content. These concerns cause some producers to invite the preachers they follow in Islamic learning groups to deliver their sermon on TV stations. In this situation, TV stations compete to provide better *dakwah* programmes in terms and more authoritative voices of Islam from their preachers.

This chapter focuses on the Salafi *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 and TransTV to see how religious authority is contested in the broadcast of *dakwah* on TV channels and its consequences in the society. It includes Salafi *dakwah* formats, agendas, and networks. The various programmes of *dakwah* available on TV facilitates some preachers from Muslim organisations to participate in its broadcast to spread their principles and reach their audiences. As a result, disputes, debates and conflicts among Muslim organisations concerning the contents of *dakwah* programmes on TV is unavoidable. In what follows, I will discuss the Salafi *dakwah* movement in Indonesia to give social and cultural backgrounds of Salafi movement in the country. It includes the way how Salafi ideology has arrived, influenced and spread throughout Indonesia. I will discuss its *dakwah* methods through educational institutions and media (radio and TV). I will elaborate the emergence of Salafi *dakwah* programmes on the national commercial TV channels and the key role of TV producers. Afterwards, I will discuss the public debates caused by the controversies of Salafi *dakwah* programmes to see the competition of religious authority in the broadcast of *dakwah* on TV.

Salafi *dakwah* in Indonesia: a brief overview

Some extensive studies on Salafi movement in Indonesia have been conducted by several researchers (Jahroni 2015, Wahid 2014, and Hasan 2006).[140] The most extensive study on it has been conducted by Noorhaidi Hasan (2006) in his book *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militancy, and the Quest for Identity in Post-New Order Indonesia*. There are, however, only a few studies on Salafi *dakwah* movement in the media. One study is Sunarwoto's (2016) research on Salafi radio in Surakarta (also known as Solo). To avoid redundancy, I will provide a brief explanation on Salafi *dakwah* movement in Indonesia to provide social and cultural backgrounds of the emergence of Salafi *dakwah* programmes on TV.

The term 'Salafi' is an Arabic word, which comes from the verb 'salafa' which means 'to precede' and 'salaf' means 'predecessor'. A Salafi is known as 'a person who follows the *manhaj* (path) of the *salaf*, the first three generations of the Muslim community who are perceived as exemplary Muslims' (Tasman and Kirana 2017: 262 and Wahid 2014: 18). These first three generations consist of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (*sahabah*), their followers (*tabi'un*), and the followers of their followers (*tabi'ut at-tabi'in*), who are considered by Muslims as the true voices of Islam. However, traditionalist, reformist, and even liberal Muslims also claim to be the followers of the pious predecessors. The claim to be Salafi is quite popular among Muslim scholars and activists, who claim themselves as Salafis exclusively, while denying its use by others. This is the reason why it is important to sort these claims into several groups to understand what is the difference between Salafism and Wahhabism and what type of Salafism is broadcast on TransTV and Trans7. Some Muslim scholars and activists are confused and question whether *dakwah* programmes on TransTV and Trans7 are Salafi or Wahhabi.

In respect of the emulation of the predecessor, Salafi scholars, in general in the Muslim world, have different opinions on the way they base their opinions to deal with their legal and theological matters. Consequently, they were divided into two groups. The first group, *ahl al-ra'y* (the people of

[140] See other examples in Sukidi Mulyadi. 2003. "Violence under the Banner of Religion: The Case of Laskar Jihad and Laskar Kristus." *Studia Islamika* 10 (2): 75 – 109, Muhammad Sirozi. 2005. "The Intellectual Roots of Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia: Ja'far Umar Thalib of Laskar Jihad (Jihad Fighters) and His Educational Beckground." *The Muslim World* 95 (1): 81-120, and Saiful Umam, 2006. "Radical Muslims in Indonesia: The Case of Ja'far Umar Thalib and the Laskar Jihad." *Explorations in Southeast Asian Studies* 6 (1): 1-26.

considered opinion), emphasised 'their own scholarly views as a source for establishing legal rulings' (Wagemakers 2016: 3). This group answer the questions concerning Islam based on the verses of the Quran, the practices of early Muslims including the Prophet Muhammad, their opinion, and *ijmā'* or the consensus of Muslim scholars (Wagemakers 2016: 28–38). On the contrary, the second group emerged as the people of the prophetic tradition (*ahl al-hadith*). They believed that after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the numerous prophetic traditions were more authoritative and authentic than just Muslim scholars' opinion (*ra'y*) (Wagemakers 2016: 3). The debate between *ahl al-ra'y* and *ahl al-hadith* leads to:

> A realization among the former group that the traditions (*ḥadīth*s) ascribed to the prophet could not be ignored. Under the guidance of especially Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī (767–820), the eponymous "founder" of the Shāfi'ī school of Islamic law, a middle way was found between the different approaches that incorporated both the Qurʾān and the Sunna of the Prophet as major—though not the only—sources of a single legal system that developed into various schools (*madhāhib*, sing. *madhhab*). The result became the legal basis of what can be considered orthodox or mainstream Islam as adhered to by most Sunni Muslims.

In response, *ahl al-hadith* oppose the middle way and defended their approach to Islamic law by focusing entirely on the Quran and Hadiths. Their opposition results in their separation from the orthodox Sunni. Some of the exponents of this approach are Aḥmad b. Taymiyya (d. 1328) and his student Muḥammad b. Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350), who are major sources of inspiration for Salafism today. Afterwards, they inspire the Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia established through an agreement between Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792) and Muḥammad b. Sa'ūd (d. 1765).

In terms of religious matters, Salafism and Wahhabism have the same objectives to reinforce the doctrine of Islamic theology and purify Islam misleading practises influenced mostly by local traditions in a particular society. In this respect, Wahhabism can be considered to represent the first truly Salafism even though it takes until the 20th century before this turn into the worldwide trend (Wagemakers 2016: 5). In politics, this Salafism inspires political Islam such as Ikhwanul Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood)[141] and

[141] Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn (Muslim Brotherhood) is a transnational Sunni Islamist organisation, established in Egypt by Hassan Aal-Banna in 1928. Muslim Brotherhood combined political activism with Islamic charity work in their movements, which has

Hizbut Tahrir (Islamic Party of Liberation).[142] It also has radical groups including al-Qaeda[143] and Jemaah Islamiyah or JI,[144] which conducted several terror attacks in several countries in the world.[145] These Salafi groups are transnational, which have branches worldwide (Fealy & Bubalo 2005: viii).[146] Salafi groups usually propose the reestablishment of Islamic caliphate, implementation of Islamic law, and purification of the creed of Islam (Abuza 2007: 78–79).

Salafi *dakwah* movement has reached Indonesia through two ways. First, it came to Indonesia through Muslim scholars who travelled to the archipelago before Indonesian independence in 1945. They taught Islam to the people and spread Islam throughout the archipelago.[147] The early presence of Salafism in Indonesia was evident in the *Padri* movement in West Sumatra

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influenced Islamist movements around the world, including *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (Indonesian Justice and Prosperity Party or PKS). For focused discussion about PKS, see Yon Machmudi. 2008. *Islamising Indonesia: The rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)*. Canberra: ANU E Press, 133-163.

[142] Founded in Jerusalem by Taqiuddin al-Nabhani in 1953 as Sunni Islam organization, Hizb al-Taḥrīr (Islamic Party of Liberation) is a transnational Islamic political organisation whose main aim is to establish Islamic caliphate and unify the Muslim community in the world. For more discussions about its establishment, see Mohamed Nawab Mohamed Osman. 2010. "The Transnational Network of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia." *South East Asia Research* 18 (4): 736-743.

[143] Al-Qaeda (Ar. Al-Qāida or the Foundation) is a militant Sunni Islamist organization led by Osama bin Laden. It was founded by him and other Arab volunteers who fought against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s. It operates as a network consisting of Salafist Jihadists and Islamic extremists around the world to plan terrorist attacks on civilian and military forces. Of the attacks were the September 11 and Bali bombings in Indonesia. For detailed explanations about Al-Qaeda, see Karen J. Greenberg. 2005. *Al-Qaeda Now: Understanding today's terrorists*. Cambridge (etc.): Cambridge University Press.

[144] JI is part of al-Qaeda network operating in Southeast Asia, especially in Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines. For its operations in Indonesia, see International Crisis Group. December 2002. "Indonesia Backgrounder: How the Jemaah Islamiyah Terrorist Network Operates." https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-east-asia/indonesia/indonesia-backgrounder-how-jemaah-islamiyah-terrorist-network-operates. Last accessed, November 30, 2016.

[145] In Indonesia, some terrorists are the followers of Al-Qaeda or JI. For example, Imam Samudra, who played an important role in carrying out the 2002 Bali Bombing is a follower of the two organisations. See Noorhaidi Hassan. 2007. "Imam Samudra's Justification for Bali Bombing." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 30 (12): 1033-1056.

[146] For a detailed discussion of the transmission of ideas of Wahhabism to Indonesia in politics including the network of terrorist organisations, see Greg Fealy and Anthony Bubalo. 2005. *Joining the Caravan? The Middle East, Islamism and Indonesia*, New South Wales: Lowy Institute for International Policy.

[147] For detailed discussion on the role of Muslim scholars from abroad to spread Islam in Indonesia, see Azyumardy Azra. 2002. *Islam Nusantara Jaringan Global dan Lokal* [Indonesian Islam in Global and Local Perspectives]. Bandung: Mizan.

in the early eighteenth century. This movement called for Muslims to purify their practices from local traditions, which resulted in civil war for years until the Dutch invasion in the region (Wahid 2014: 56). The leader of the *Padri* war, Tuanku Imam Bonjol, was a Salafi follower (Hadler 2008: 1002). In the early twentieth century, the same call for Muslims to purify their believes from local customs came from reformist movement including Muhammadiyah in 1912, Al-Irsyad in 1914, and Persatuan Islam (Persis) in 1923. In response to this, traditional Muslim leaders formed NU in 1926 to protect and maintain the local traditions. These organisations were discussed in Chapter 1.

Second, the contemporary Salafi *dakwah* movement in Indonesia was introduced by Indonesian students, who studied in Saudi Arabia and then return to their home country in the late 1980s. The oil boom in 1970s encouraged the Saudi government to export its Wahhabi Islam to Muslim countries to fight against the influence of its rivals: Nasser's Arab socialism and Shi'ism (Wahid 2014: 57). Through the Rabitat al-'Alam al-Islami (the Muslim World League/RAI) Saudi government provided large amount of money to Muslim countries for various purposes including scholarship, building mosques and supporting preachers (Wahid 2014: 57). It was within this scheme Saudi government offered opportunity to Indonesian students to study in Saudi universities. In Indonesia, these scholarships were connected through Saudi-linked institutions such as *Dewan Dakwah Islamiyyah Indonesia* or *Dewan Dakwah* (Indonesian Council for Islamic Propagation/DDII) and *Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Arab* (Institute for Islamic and Arabic Sciences/LIPIA). As will be described later, the Salafi TV preachers were awarded scholarships by these institutions. These students have contributed significantly to spread of the branches of Salafism in Indonesia since the late nineteenth century (Fealy & Bubalo, 2005, p. viii). After their return to Indonesia, they disseminated their *dawkah* through Islamic learning groups, gatherings, *pesantren*, printings, and radio (Jamhari and Jahroni 2004: 129–160 and Hasan 2010: 310).

The emergence of Salafi *dakwah* programmes on TransTV and Trans7 channels cannot be separated Rodja, a Salafi community TV station based in Bogor. Before becoming a TV station, Rodja was a Salafi radio, which was established in 2005 based on the broadcasting act number 32, 2003 in the frequency of 756 kHz (AM). Its establishment was initiated by Fawaz, Ihsan, and Badrussalam. Fawaz and Ihsan saw the opportunity to extend the *dakwah* led by Badrussalam through radio to reach broader audiences. His *dakwah*

which is conducted in mosque Al-Barkah has lasted since 1980s, in the early period of Saudi government's Wahhabi expansion. It was Badrusssalam's father and family who continued it for generations including his brothers Agus Hasanuddin and Yazid Jawas. Abu Yahya Badrussalam or Badrussalam graduated from Islamic University of Medina, Saudi Arabia with the scholarship from Saudi government. Before pursuing his study in Saudi Arabia, Badrussalam studied Islam in *pesantren* Al-Irsyad Tengaran, Semarang.[148] It is within *pesantren* Al-Irsyad's network that other Salafi *pesantrens* started to spread across the country (Wahid 2014: 62). Fawaz and Ihsan never studied in Saudi Arabia but they studied Islam in Salafi *pesantren* Imam Bukhori in Solo, where they learn to operate a community radio to disseminate the teachings of their *pesantren*. According to Fawaz and Ihsan, the idea to establish a community radio in their *pesantren* was inspired by the success of Laskar Jihad's community radio in Maluku before the conflict in Poso, Ambon between Muslims and Christians.[149] Laskar Jihad is an Islamist and anti-Christian Indonesian militia led by Jafar Umar Tholib during religious conflict in Maluku in 2000. They are considered radical Salafi group which was later banned by Indonesian government.[150] After finishing their education in Solo, Ihsan returned and joined Badrussalam in Bogor. Fawaz continued his study to LIPIA but did not graduate. He met Badrussalam for the first time in a Salafi learning circle (*dauroh*) in Bogor and later joined Badrussalam.[151]

As we can see here, Badrussalam, Fawaz, and Ihsan are connected through a Salafi *pesantren* network (Al-Irsyad and Imam Bukhori) and learning group. Salafi networks are known to strong in maintaining their ideology and agendas. This network contributes significantly to the distribution of Salafi preachers on commercial TV channels. Rodja radio maintains their networks with other Salafi radios and *pesantrens*. Some Salafi *pesantrens* have radio stations to spread their teaching to a broader audience. For example, Assunnah radio station belongs to *pesantren* Asunnah and radio Dhiya'ussunnah is owned by *pesantren* Dhiya'ussunnah in Cirebon. Rodja radio station is considered to be the leading Salafi radio station in the country. In addition to *Al-Irsyad* and *Imam Bukhori*, Salafi *pesantren* networks include

[148] Interview with Fawaz, Bogor, August 2, 2015.
[149] Interview with Fawaz, Bogor, August 2, 2015.
[150] For comprehensive study on Laskar Jihad, see Noorhaidi Hasan. 2006. *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militancy, and the Quest for Identity in the Post-New Order Indonesia*. Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program.
[151] Interview with Fawaz, Bogor, August 2, 2015.

Ma'had Al-Ghufron Gresik, East Java, *Ma'had Riyadhul Jannah* Bogor, *Ma'had Takhassus 'Ulum Syar'iyyah* Bogor, and *Ma'had Ibnu Abbas As Salafy* Sragen (Wahid 2014).

As a Salafi radio station, Rodja focuses on the agendas of purification of beliefs from local customs, implementation of Islamic law and the establishment of Islamic caliphate. These agendas are delivered by Badrussalam to *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 and TransTV. In terms of the concept of the implementation of Islamic law and establishment of Islamic caliphate, Rodja refers to that of *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia* (the Indonesian Party of Liberation/HTI), one of the radical Salafi organisations in Indonesia (Jamhari and Jahroni, 2004: 169–174). It is a branch of the transnational radical Muslim organisation, Hizbut Tahrir (HT) in Indonesia as discussed in Chapter 1.

HT was introduced to Indonesia by Abdul Rahman al-Baghdadi, a preacher of Jordanian-Lebanese descent in 1983. Since 2004, HTI has been led by Muhammad Ismail Yusanto. The political system of HTI proposes the unity of Muslim communities around the world under one system of an Islamic state, which reinforces Islamic law as a guidance to rule and live on earth.[152] The outspoken agendas of Indonesian state ideology from HTI have strengthened public debates in the society, which led to its banning by the government in 19 July 2017. With the amendment of regulation of mass organisation, the government under Joko Widodo's administration considered HTI agendas against state ideology.[153]

In operating its programmes, Rodja radio is financed with donations from its audiences as they do not accept advertisement revenue. There are two kinds of donors: regular and irregular. The audiences can register as a regular donor with the amount ranging from the lowest of fifty thousand of Indonesian rupiah to an unlimited amount, paid monthly. To be a regular donor Muslims can register via SMS to the available phone number in the

[152] For detailed biography of HTI, see Ken Ward. 2009. "Non-violent Extremist? Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 63 (2): 149-164.

[153] Ihsanuddin. May 2018. "Jalan Panjang Pemerintah Bubarkan FPI [Long Jouney of the Government to Ban HTI Organisation]." https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2018/05/08/10463051/jalan-panjang-pemerintah-bubarkan-hti. Last accessed, November 4, 2018. For the document of the regulation amendment of mass organization in Indonesia, see Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia. 2017. "Perubahan atas Undang-Undang Nomor 17 Tahun 2013 tentang Organisasi Kemasyarakatan [Amandment of Regulation Number 17, 2013 concerning Mass Organisation]." http://setkab.go.id/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Perpu_Nomor_2_Tahun_2017.pdf. Last accessed, November 4, 2018.

website of Rodja and after receiving confirmation message of registration they can transfer the amount to the account of *Yayasan Cahaya Sunnah* (Foundation of the Light of Prophetic Tradition) in Cibubur Bogor.[154]

In 2009, Rodja radio launched their streaming Rodja TV after its success with the radio. In 2011, Rodja TV expanded their broadcasting through a parabolic satellite so that people could access them all over the country. The streaming of Rodja TV can be reached through their website at http://rodja.tv/live. The radio and TV usually broadcast the same programmes at the same time. Therefore, the audiences of Rodja could decide which media they want to follow. The available streaming in the websites of Rodja TV makes it reachable through smartphones and has enabled the formation of borderless audiences.

The success in expanding Salafi propagation of Islam from a radio community to a community TV channel seems to encourage their scholars to seek more frequent coverage on commercial television sphere. This expectation can be achieved either by upgrading Rodja TV to a commercial television or bringing the programmes of Rodja TV to commercial TV channels. Therefore, the broadcast of Salafi *dakwah* on commercial TV channels is part of the agendas to expand their *dakwah.*

The emergence of Salafi *dakwah* on TV

Trans7 is a private commercial television station based in Jakarta under the corporations of *Kelompok Kompas Gramedia* (Gramedia Kompas Group) and CT. Corporation. It was launched on December 15, 2006. Like other private television channels, the programmes on Trans7 consist of news, entertainment, talk shows and others. The term 'mainstreaming' here means the efforts of the Salafi leaders to render Rodja TV from a community television channel into a programme in private television. Based on the regulation of KPI, television broadcasting can be distinguished into three categories: public, private and community-based. Public and private television stations have larger coverage than community-based stations. Public television is owned by the government of Indonesia, while private channels are owned by an individual or a conglomerate. Community

[154] For more details of Rodja media funding, see Radio Rodja. "Program Muhsinin Tetap Radio Rodja dan RodjaTV [Muhsinin Program of Rodja Radio and RodjaTV]." http://www.radiorodja.com/infaq-sedekah-dan-zakat-online-infaq-online-sedekah-online-dan-zakat-online-via-radio-rodja-dan-rodjatv/program-muhsinin-tetap-radio-rodja-dan-rodjatv/. Last accessed, April 13, 2017.

television stations usually belong to a particular organisation and their coverage is limited to a particular area and accessible to people who have a parabolic satellite. There is no control from the government after the liberation of press regulation by Habibie in 1999. Instead, there is an independent institution, KPI, which watch television and radio industries as discussed in Chapter 1.[155]

There are three kinds of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7: (1) *Rahasia Sunnah* (the Secret of Prophetic Traditions), (2) *Khazanah Islam* (the Treasury of Islam) and *Khalifah* (the Caliph). *Dakwah* programmes in Trans7 differ from other private television stations in terms of setup, contents and preachers. If other programmes of propagation of Islam on other private televisions arrange a stage on which the preachers and a presenter sit facing the cameras, all *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 begin with a short documentary movie concerning the topic the preacher will discuss after the introductory movie has finished. During the screening of the short documentary a man or woman explains what is shown and occasionally quotes several verses of the Quran or Hadiths. This type of *dakwah* has appeared since 2010 in Trans7.

Another distinction concerns the contents. While *dakwah* programmes in other channels tend to avoid controversial topics, the programmes in Trans7 select such topics. For example, in the *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 the preachers discuss the prohibition of grave visiting and some kinds of prayers. These are debatable issues in Islamic jurisprudence. Unlike other channels, which usually choose famous television preachers such as Mamah Dedeh, Yusuf Mansur, and others as discussed in the previous chapter, *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 choose Salafi preachers of Rodja TV, who are not necessarily well-known. Thus, it is important to know how they can enter the domain of television preachers. Who are the agents and what the roles do they play to mainstream Salafism in *dakwah* programmes in a private television station?

During my fieldwork in Jakarta in 2014, I found that the deputy chief producer of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 is a Salafi. I was able to meet him through a friend who works for Google in Indonesia. When I met him for the first time in a small restaurant near Trans7 studio, he appeared friendly, had a long beard and a dark spot on his forehead. He stated that he began to be a

[155] For more information about broadcasting regulation in Indonesia, see Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia. "Regulasi [Regulation]." https://www.kpi.go.id/download/regulasi/. Last accessed, December 22, 2016.

Salafi follower after he watched and listened to the *dakwah* programmes on Rodja TV in 2009. His motivation became stronger as he planned to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. He argued that as a journalist, he had to be critical, liberal and open-minded. Before going to Mecca, he tried to improve his religiosity. He attended several gatherings of Islamic learning groups, yet he could not find the teachings of Islam that he was seeking until he watched and listened to Rodja TV. This bearded man had continued watching and listening to this TV channel for two years and after that attended its learning communities. Through his routine attendance in the gatherings, he has developed good relations with Rodja TV preachers. After he returned from pilgrimage, in the beginning of 2010, he began his initiation to invite the preachers, who are affiliated with Rodja TV like Syafiq Reza Basalamah, Badrussalam, and Budi Ashari to deliver their sermons on Trans7. He also changed the previous programmes of propagation of Islam on Trans7 to the above-mentioned programmes.[156]

There are other Salafis at Trans7 apart from this deputy chief, Ruwandanu. He is the entertainment producer of Trans7, who is also a Salafi. His motivation to be a Salafi follower began after he met the deputy producer, Wiryoutomo and the preacher of Rodja TV, Badrussalam. He followed their suggestion to watch and listen to Rodja TV and then decided to be a Salafi. Afterwards, he requested the management of Trans7 to move him to the *dakwah* division. During the interview, he explained that:

> I get guidance in Mecca that I have to produce programmes not only for the sake of money, but also for hereafter. I was successful to produce entertainment programmes in terms of audiences and ratings. Islamic programmes are not bad in ratings. The enthusiasm of audiences grows significantly. It just needs more creativity and passion. So, I move to Islamic programmes not because of my boss but I propose myself to produce these programmes to benefit for both money and hereafter.[157]

The producer of the division of entertainment programme of Trans7 considers the success in producing programmes, which give benefits economically and religiously a dream of every Muslim to be successful on earth and in the hereafter. Muslims believe that the measurement of success on earth is to earn a lot of money and that that in hereafter by improving piety. Beside his achievement as the producer of entertainment programmes, the producer of

[156] Interview with Wiryoutomo, Jakarta, September 12, 2014.
[157] Interview with Ruwandanu, Jakarta, April 5, 2016.

the division of entertainment programme of Trans7 asserts that the vice chief producer of programmes on Trans7 played an important role in the approval of his proposal to move to *dakwah* programmes by the management.[158] Afterwards, he joins the vice chief producer's team in the production of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7.

Rodja TV has played a pivotal role in mainstreaming Salafism on commercial television stations, especially on Trans7. Its central role can be viewed in two elements of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7. Firstly, Trans7 has become the only channel, in which all the preachers of its programmes of propagation of Islam are Salafis from the Rodja TV network. The preachers in Trans7 like Badrussalam, Budi Ashari, and Syafiq Reza Basalamah are preachers from Rodja TV. Badrussalam is one of the founders of Rodja media and the others joined later. Some of them, such as Badrussalam and Ashari, are involved in the production of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 as supervisors. This privilege allows them to invite members of their network to deliver sermons in Trans7 and even on other private television channels. Like on Rodja TV, Badrussalam states that he prioritises the alumni of Islamic University of Medina, Saudi Arabia because of their Islamic knowledge and experience to live in a place where Islam was born. Badrussalam, Ashari and Syafiq Reza Basalamah are graduates from Islamic University of Medina. This makes them more legitimate and authoritative for particular audience than the preachers who never study Islam in the Middle East.[159]

Besides, the producers of the *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 find the role of Rodja TV preachers in Trans7 helpful because the materials have already been available from that of Rodja TV. The producers just need a little adaptation and improvement to broadcast them in Trans7. Moreover, the *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 - like Khazanah and Khalifah - are occasionally broadcast live from some Islamic historical sites in the Middle East such as during the fasting month of Ramadan when they need the experiences of those preachers during their stay in the Middle East.[160]

Secondly, most of the content of the *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 ranging from topic selection to short documentary movies are derived from Rodja TV because the preachers are from Rodja networking. The selected topics are based on the negotiation and discussion between the preachers and producers. The producers usually agree with the suggestion of the preachers

[158] Interview with Ruwandanu, Jakarta, April 5, 2016.
[159] Interview with Badrussalam, Jakarta, May 12, 2014.
[160] Interview with Ruwandanu, Jakarta, April 5, 2016.

about a particular topic. Ruwandanu states that the producers almost never reject the offer of topics from the preachers because they have more Islamic knowledge and experience about of propagation of Islam. On the other hand, he also asserts that it makes the producers' work much easier to the extent that they have to cast for five minutes only because documentary movies and the topics have been prepared by the preachers. Rodja TV has provided all the materials for the casting and the producers follow the preachers' suggestion and adapt some screens and narration for their programmes of propagation of Islam.[161]

Given the fact that Trans7 is a private commercial television station under the umbrella of corporations owned by the Jacob Utomo (d. 2020), who was a Catholic, and is directed by Chairul Tanjung, who is not Salafi, the presence of Salafi propagation on Trans7 raises a question why the owner and director of Trans7 allow the programmes of Salafi propagation through their television channel? I found that the reason behind is for the sake of commercial purposes. As discussed in the previous chapter, programmes of propagation of Islam have been on the rise since the beginning of the twentieth first century in Indonesia. The emergence of Salafi propagation of Islam in Trans7 provides new models of commodification of programmes of propagation of Islam, which differ those of other television channels as mentioned above. Ruwandanu explains that the management of Trans7 usually approves the proposed programmes as long as they have a clear market.[162] The Salafi-oriented propagation of Islam on Rodja TV has existed since 2009, which was expanded from radio. It means that they have regular audiences and their followers are increasing significantly. Beside listening and watching Salafi media, some Muslims in urban areas around Jakarta are attending Salafi learning communities in universities, mosques, and other places. This fact is an opportunity of Trans7 to bring Salafi propagation of Islam to their programmes for audiences and benefit from this trend.

The agendas of Salafi *dakwah* programmes on TV

As mentioned above, Salafi propagation of Islam has three main agendas: (1) purification of the creed of Islam, (2) the implementation of Sharia by law, and (3) the establishment of an Islamic state. Their agenda has become the central topic in the *dakwah* programmes Trans7. In several episodes, the

[161] Interview with Ruwandanu, Jakarta, April 5, 2016.
[162] Interview with Ruwandanu, Jakarta, April 5, 2016.

programmes of Salafi propagation display and criticise many kinds of practices and customs that are practised by many Muslims in Indonesia to correct them in order to be in line with Salafi teachings. Likewise, in the cases of Islamic law and establishment of caliphate, they discuss them in one episode because it is impossible to implement the former without the later. According to Salafi preachers, Islamic law can be implemented fully all over the archipelago if Islamic state is established.

An episode of *Khazanah* entitled *Kupas Tuntas Syirik Besar* (Total Uncovering of the Unforgiveable Sin)[163] displays several local practices and customs that *Khazanah* categorises as being a grave sin. For example, the programme states that making pilgrimages to tombs of saints is forbidden and categorised being sinful. Many Muslims in Indonesia, especially on Java, often visit the graves saints of Islam in Indonesia and other graves to recite several verses of the Quran and prayers around these graves (see Figure 4.1.). They visit the graves throughout the year, while for families usually conducted in Idul Fitri (the Festive Day of Islam after the fasting month Ramadan). Muslims, who visit the graves, believe that God will answer their prayers because they pray at the tombs of the saints, or at the graves of the trusted people or friends of God, who are well known for their historical role in the spread of Islam in Indonesia. Salafis have considered all the practices (the visit to the graves and the recitation of prayers on them) misleading and categorised them as sinful because all the practices were not practised by the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. They believe that the spirit of the saints can give them blessing and power to fulfil their requests, while according to Salafi teaching, only God, who can provide blessing and fulfil Muslims' requests.[164]

[163] *Shirk* means to associate things with God or believe that there are other divine things than God including animism. Muslims are forbidden to believe that there are others as powerful as or more powerful than God.

[164] Recorded and uploaded to Youtube in Khazanah Islam Trans7. January 2014. "Kupas Tuntas Syirik Besar [Uncover Big Shirk]."
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZLHoaJ8OPI. Last accessed, November 13, 2015.

Figure 4.1.: Programme of propagation of Islam, *Khazanah*, displays a number of Muslims praying around the graves in their short documentary movie about big sin. Source: the author

Another example of a great sin is the ritual of *Malam Satu Suro* (the Eve of Suro); named after a month in the Javanese calendar. It is a celebration of the New Year on Javanese Calendar held by the Palace of Surakarta every year. The month of Suro always corresponds to, or is equated with Muharram, the first month on Islamic calendar. This ritual consists of several processions. The one shown in *Khazanah* of Trans7 is *Kirab Mubeng Beteng* (the Procession surrounding the Palace Walls). This procession includes a long line of the heirlooms of the Palace and its members witnessed by local villagers and domestic and international tourists. Other processions of *Malam Satu Suro* are *Tahlilan*, 'recitation of several verses from the Holy Qur'an […] and *selawatan al-berzanzi* (recitation of the stories of the prophet Muhammad), traditional Javanese chanting of praises to Allah and Prophet Muhammad, and *Qasidahan*,[165] traditional religious singing accompanied by hand drums, were performed during the heart of the ceremonies' (Daniels 2009: 22).[166] Salafi scholars categorise this ritual misleading for several reasons. One of those reasons is that Muslims who join and support it believe that the heirlooms of the Palace of Surakarta have power equal to God. In the display, *Khazanah* quoted several verses from the Quran describing the

[165] See the explanation about Qasidah in chapter 2.
[166] For detailed discussion on the rituals of *Malam Satu Suro* in the island of Java, see Daniels Timothy. 2009. *Islamic Spectrum*. Surrey: Ashgate, pp. 20-30.

prohibition of believing in divine powers other than God. For example, in Q.S.10: 106-107:

> And do not invoke besides Allah that which neither benefits you nor harms you, for if you did, then indeed you would be of the wrongdoers. And if Allah should touch you with adversity, there is no remover of it except Him, and if He intends for you good, then there is no repeller of His bounty. He causes it to reach whom He wills of His servants. And He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.[167]

In respect of the quotations of the Quran and Hadith, Badrussalam stipulates that quotation of the Quranic verses and Hadiths is very important to legitimise their opinion about the rituals. He continues his argument that what makes Salafi more authentic than other schools in Islam is that it always refers to the Quran and Hadiths to determine whether or not particular practices, rituals and customs are lawful. The celebration of *Malam Satu Suro* is not lawful in Islam according to them. Some scholars, who are proponents of this celebration, employ their own reasoning beyond what is stated in the Quran and Hadiths such as Qiyas.[168] Qiyas, which constitutes 'reasoning by analogy,'[169] is one of the methods in formulating Islamic law in Sunni Islam tradition.

Badrussalam is asked how this episode triggers a reaction from the proponents of the above-mentioned practices. He answers that he has predicted the consequences of the broadcast of *Khazanah* episode of a grave sin and that 'the truth' must be revealed even though it is bitter to accept and it is an obligation for Muslims to advise their fellow Muslims when they do something incorrect. He is not afraid of the reaction because he has strong reasons to deliver it for the sake of propagation of Islam.[170] His statement reflects how he has considered and anticipated the consequences of the broadcast, and his strong intention to spread Salafism to the national audiences.

Other episodes of Salafi purification agenda are about Muslim groups which *Khazanah* consider to be misleading. The topic of misleading Muslim

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[167] The English translation of the verses of the Quran quoted in this chapter 1 from "The Qur'ān: English Meanings" Jeddah: Saheeh International Professional and typesetting.
[168] Interview with Badrussalam, Jakarta, May 12, 2014.
[169] For more details, see Bernand, M. and Troupeau, G., "Ḳiyās", in: Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition, Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0527. Last Accessed, March 14, 2021.
[170] Interview with Badrussalam, Jakarta, May 12, 2014.

groups in *Khazanah* is divided into several episodes. The first one introduces the history of the emergence of heretical groups after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, beginning with the declaration of false prophets and later the emergence of heretical Muslim groups, and how the Islamic caliphates dealt with them. The false prophets were defeated by the caliphates and forced to plead for forgiveness to God.

Afterwards, the second episode of *Khazanah* focuses on Ahmadiyah. Ahmadiyah is an Islamic religious movement, established by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in India in the late nineteenth century. For some of his followers, he is considered as a new prophet after the Prophet Muhammad. The Ahmadiyah movement came to Indonesia in the beginning of 20th century through the invitation of Indonesian students, who studied Islam in Lahore and Qadian, India. In this episode, the preacher explains how Ahmadiyah has been banned in several Muslim majority countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh. Ahmadiyah is considered to be misleading based on its teachings especially concerning the belief of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet.[171] The Ahmadiyah has been banned in Indonesia through a fatwa of MUI in 2005. As explained above, MUI is a semi-official institution, established on July 26, 1975. Its establishment was initiated by president Suharto. He invited some prominent Muslim scholars to form a council whose main duty at that time was to provide advice for the government regarding religious matters. This council is under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Most of the members of the council are affiliated to Muslim organisations including NU, Muhammadiyah, and some Salafi organisations in the country.[172] The fatwa of MUI was justified by *Surat Keputusan Bersama* (the Joint Ministerial Decree) in 2008,[173] signed by the minister of religious affairs, home affairs, and the attorney general.[174]

In the third episode of heretical Muslim groups, the preacher of *Khazanah* discusses about Shia, an Islamic school, which is associated with

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[171] For more detailed discussions on Ahmadiyya in Indonesia, see Ahmad Najib Burhani. 2013. *When Muslims are not Muslims: The Ahmadiyya Community and the Discourse on Heresy in Indonesia*. Michigan: ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Publisher.
[172] For detailed discussion on MUI, see Mochammad Nor Ichwan. 2005. "Ulama, State and Politics: Majelis Ulama Indonesia after Suharto." *Islamic Law and Society* 12 (1): 45-72.
[173] Ahmadiyya. "SKB 3 Menteri tentang Ahmadiyya [Joint Decree of 3 Ministers about Ahmadiyya]." http://Ahmadiyya.org/skb-3-menteri-tentang-Ahmadiyya/. Last accessed, December 7, 2016.
[174] For detailed discussion of the banning of Ahmadiyya, see Syahril Siddik. 2011. *Cursing the Sacred: recent debates on blasphemy in Indonesia*. Unpublished Master Thesis. Leiden: Leiden University, pp. 39-57.

one of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad, Ali bin Abu Tholib. In contrast to Shia followers, the adherents of Sunni Islam believe that Muhammad did not appoint any successor before his death. Similar to the Ahmadiyah, Shia came to Indonesia before Indonesian independence and has long lived together with other Muslim organisations in Indonesia. Their presence has only become problematised after 1998. The preacher of this episode further describes Shia rituals, which are considered heretical. These include the celebration of Idul Ghadir,[175] which is one of the Shia feast days, celebrated every year in 18th of Dzulhijah in the Islamic calendar. It is believed that in this day the Prophet Muhammad appointed Ali bin Abu Tholib as his successor to be a caliphate and leader of Muslims. This appointment was conducted in the last pilgrimage of the Prophet Muhammad before he died.

On the contrary, according to Sunni schools, there are only two feast days in Islam, *Idul Fitri* and *Idul Adha*. Bachtiar Nasir, a preacher in this episode states that there is no other feast day other than the two feast days. He argues that Idul Ghadir can threaten the unity of Muslims in Indonesia because it is celebrated by a misguided school. In this episode, the preacher states that heretical sects are obviously categorised as 'terrorist', to be a serious threat, which requires an immediate action of the government, in case it destroys the unity of the country. Unlike their response to demand of banning of Ahmadiyah, the central board of MUI in Jakarta seems reluctant to issue a fatwa banning Shia in Indonesia, even though its headquarters in Surabaya has issued it.[176]

The last episode of *Khazanah* discusses the heresy of *Jaringan Islam Liberal* or JIL (the Liberal Islam Network). JIL is a forum of discussion and dissemination of the concept of Islamic liberalism in Indonesia. The first discussion, considered as the date of its establishment, was held on February 21, 2001 by one of its leaders, Luthfi Assyaukanie. Most members of JIL have western education background and some of them have studied Islam in the Middle East. The key reason for its establishment was to counter the

[175] For a detailed history and development of Shia in Indonesia, see Zulkifli. 2009. *The Struggle of the Shi'is in Indonesia*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Leiden: Leiden University and Moh Hasyim. 2012. "Shia: its history and development in Indonesia." *Analisa: Journal of Social Science and Religion* 19 (2): 147-158.

[176] See Erik Purnama Putra. November 2015. "Fatwa MUI Jatim: Ajaran Syiah Sesat [East Java MUI Fatwa: Shia Teachings are Misleading]." http://khazanah.republika.co.id/berita/dunia-islam/islam-nusantara/15/11/29/nykugi334-fatwa-mui-jatim-ajaran-syiah-sesat. Last accessed, December 7, 2016.

growth of Islamic radical and militant groups in Indonesia.[177] In relation to JIL, the preacher of *Khazanah* asserts that JIL is misleading because they disseminate the ideas of pluralism, liberalism, and secularism. These ideas have been banned by MUI through their fatwa in 2005. As the fatwa on Ahmadiyah, MUI explain that the spread of the ideas of pluralism, liberalism, and secularism had created public confusion and therefore MUI considered that it was important to issue a religious opinion about it. This fatwa was issued by the same committee in the same year as that for Ahmadiyah. Referring to the fatwa of MUI, *Khazanah* explains that pluralism teaches people that all religions are similar to one another and all the adherents of religions in the world will live side by side in heaven and liberalism is dangerous because it prioritises free thinking in interpreting the text of the Quran and select the teachings of Islam only for their benefits. In respect of secularism, *Khazanah* explains that it attempts to separate religion from human matters on earth that human matters on earth nothing to do with religion, but are to decide based on consensus amongst people.[178]

In these episodes of heretical Muslim groups, the preachers criticise the government, who do not ban Shia and JIL, as they have done with banning Ahmadiyah. The followers of the above-mentioned heretical Muslim groups still exist in Indonesia but they have faced difficulties to perform their beliefs. The followers of Ahmadiyah in several districts in Indonesia left their homes because they reject to follow the mainstream beliefs of Sunni Islam in Indonesia. The adherents of Shia are forbidden by the majority of Muslims to perform their rituals publicly, while JIL is frequently subject to threats and violence.[179]

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[177] See Ahmad Ali Nurdin. 2010. "Islam and State: A Study on the Liberal Islamic Network in Indonesia, 1999-2004." In *Islam in Southeast Asia*, eds. Joseph Chinyong Liow and Nadirsyah Hosen, 191-210. London (stc.): Routledge.

[178] For original document of fatwa, see Majelis Ulama Indonesia. May 2014. "Fatwa tentang Pluralisme, Liberalisme, dan Secularisme dalam Agama [Fatwa on Pluralism, Liberalism, and Secularism]." http://mui.or.id/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/12.-Pluralisme-Liberalisme-dan-Sekularisme-Agama.pdf. Last accessed, December 7, 2016. For a detailed discussion on it, see Piers Gillespie. 2007. "Current Issues in Indonesian Islam: Analysing the 2005 Council of Indonesian Ulama Fatwa no. 7 opposing pluralism, liberalism and secularism" *The Journal of Islamic Studies* 18 (2): 202–240.

[179] For information about this bomb, see Feri Fernandes. 2016. "Tak Merasa Disingkirkan, Begini Perjalanan Karier AKBP Dodi Usai Bom Buku [Do not Think Neglected, this is How Career Journey of AKBP Dodi after Book Bombing]." http://news.detik.com/berita/3137699/tak-merasa-disingkirkan-begini-perjalanan-karier-akbp-dodi-usai-bom-buku. Last accessed, December 21, 2016.

Another agenda of Salafi propagation of Islam in Trans7 is to disseminate the idea of the re-establishment of Islamic caliphate and the implementation of Islamic law. According to Salafi preachers on Trans7, the former will never be realised without the latter because the enforcement of Islamic law for the whole Muslims requires the establishment of a new Islamic caliphate, which govern all Muslims' affairs in the world. In *Khazanah* episode, *Wadah Politik Umat Muslim* (The Organisation of Muslim Politics), it is obviously stated that the concept of Islamic caliphate and enforcement of Islamic law they propose refers to that of HTI. In this episode, the preacher states that:

> HTI is an Islamic organisation with huge supporters, which aims to establish the system of Islamic caliphate. In this system, the aspirations of Muslim community all over the world to be under one government without territorial borders [will be realised], [it is] a country led by a system of Islamic caliphate, which re-enforce Islamic law system as a guidance to rule and live in the world. The implementation of Islamic law based on the principles of HTI will bring Muslims in Indonesia and all over the world to prosperity and welfare without violating non-Muslims' rights. The big mission of HTI is to re-establish Islamic caliphate that is exemplified by the prophet Muhammad.[180]

The statement of the preacher in the episode of *Khazanah* explicitly invites Muslims in Indonesia to support HTI to establish an Islamic caliphate. On the other hand, it implies a campaign to fight against democracy, which is regarded as causing problems and disadvantaging Muslims throughout the world. They blame leaders, who were elected through a democratic system, for economic crisis, moral degradation, and natural disasters. In this episode, they offer the re-establishment of Islamic caliphate as a problem solving as they argue that this caliphate is supported by God and employs a system based on the Prophet's guidance. In response to the implementation of Sharia bylaws in several provinces and districts in Indonesia,[181] the preachers argue that it is not what is ordered in the Quran, in which according to their interpretation Islamic law must be enforced for the whole Muslim community

[180] Quoted from the recoding of the episode of *Khazanah* about Muslim Political Organisation on May 11, 2015.
[181] For more discussions on Sharī'a by-laws, see Nicolas Parsons and Marcus Mietzner. 2009. "Sharia By-laws in Indonesia: A Legal and Political Analysis." *Australian Journal of Asian Law* 11 (2): 190-217.

in the world, not limited to several provinces or country. This is what is taught by the prophet Muhammad concerning a government system.

The idea and concept of Islamic caliphate in the programme *Khazanah* are reinforced by that of *Khalifah*. The topics of *Khalifah* are dominated by the success stories of Muslim caliphs and soldiers in the battles against infidels in the early years of Islam. For example, in its episode about Khalid bin Walid, a military commander in the service of the prophet Muhammad, the preacher told Khalid's success to lead Muslim armies in several wars under the first Muslim caliph of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. In this episode, the preacher explains the bravery of Khalid in fighting the enemies of Islam including those, who do not obey the regulation like paying taxes under the Islamic caliphate, the infidels, who attempt to conquer several Islamic territories, and several Muslims, who declared themselves as new prophets after the Prophet Muhammad. Further, the preacher stipulates that Israel and the U.S. are among the enemies of Islam because they conquer Palestine, one of the Islamic territories but Muslims cannot fight because of the absence of an Islamic caliphate.[182] Another example that strengthens the dissemination of Islamic caliphate is the episode of the Umayyad caliphate. In this episode, the preacher preaches a sermon on the background of the fall of the Umayyad caliphate for the audiences to take lessons that the segregation of Muslim community at the time resulted in the fall of the caliphate.[183]

The case of Salafi *dakwah* in Trans7 indicates the successful effort of Salafi leaders to mainstream the ideas of Salafism from a community to commercial television. The agendas of Salafi propagation of Islam, which have been a subordinate discourse of programmes of propagation of Islam through private television channels, now have appeared on a mainstream one. Their religious agenda of purification and the political aim of establishing an Islamic caliphate and law is central in Islamic discourses on television in Indonesia today.

Contested religious authority in *dakwah* broadcasting

The emergence of Salafi propagation of Islam on Trans7 and others has triggered several debates on some issues in the society. The leaders and members of NU play a key role in leading this debate as their reactions to the criticism of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 because Salafi agendas in the

[182] Quoted from the recoding of the episode of *Khalifah* Trans7 on June 14, 2014.
[183] Quoted from the recoding of the episode of *Khalifah* Trans7 on June 10, 2015.

programmes in Trans7 have challenged those of NU, the largest Muslim organisation, in the country. NU has three main agendas of *dakwah*: reconciliation with Indonesian tradition, accepting and guarding the national ideology, and adopting local culture in Islamic law (Burhani 2013: 27–34). All the agendas of Salafi propagation of Islam in Trans7 oppose those of NU. As a result, a competition between the two opposing parties to convince Indonesian Muslims is unavoidable.

Yahya Zainul Ma'arif, better known as Buya Yahya, a NU preacher reacted against the episode of *Khazanah* about *Kupas Tuntas Shirk Besar.* In the programme of propagation of Islam, *Siraman Qalbu* (Drenching of Heart) on MNCTV, he criticises *Khazanah* that the programme did not respect the diversity of opinions in Islamic jurisprudence because they claimed several practices of Muslims in Indonesia misleading. He further argues that there is a group of Muslims who are always correcting the practices of their fellow Muslims. Although he does not mention directly who is that group, what he means is the Salafis either in television or in the society.[184]

Moreover, the same episode of *Khazanah* was reported by several Muslim scholars from NU in Jakarta and Surabaya to KPI. In this episode, the reporters consider *Khazanah* to provoke hatred towards a particular school of Islamic jurisprudence and create intolerance towards diverse practices within Muslim communities because they categorise the practices of NU such as recitation of *Tahlilan,* visit of graves, and so forth as misleading. In response to this report, KPI held mediation on April 17, 2013 in the central office in Jakarta. KPI invited the reporters, who consisted of Habib Musthafa al Jufri, Habib Fachri Jamalullail, K.H. Thabary Syadzily, the chair of the central board of *Lembaga Dakwah NU* or LDNU (*Dakwah* Council of NU) H. Nuril Huda, MUI, and the producers of *Khazanah* to meet and discuss the issues (see Figure 4.2.).[185]

In this mediation, Idy Muzayyad from KPI suggested that *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 should have avoided sensitive and controversial topics that might stimulate public polemic in the society as mentioned in the article 7 of the regulation of *Standar Program Siaran* or SPS (the Standard

[184] Quoted from the recoding of the episode of *Siraman Qalbu* MNCTV on October 1, 2015.

[185] For the report of the mediation, see Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia. April 2013. "Trans7 Penuhi Undangan Dialog KPI Pusat Soal Tayangan Khazanah [Trans7 Fulfil KPI's Invitation for Dialogue regarding Khazanah Broadcasting]." https://www.kpi.go.id/index.php/lihat-terkini/38-dalam-negeri/31294-trans-7-penuhi-undangan-dialog-kpi-pusat-soal-tayangan-khazanah. Last accessed, December 8, 2016.

Programme of Broadcasting). After this mediation, he further states that KPI will monitor *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 closely to ensure that they obeyed the regulation. If they do not, KPI will conduct a meeting to decide a punishment, which can be an advice or ban for the programmes. KPI and MUI at the time recommended that *Khazanah* should involve a representative from MUI to supervise the production of the programmes. In response to this recommendation, the production of *Khazanah* promised to involve Muslim scholars in their production. In response, the chief of the Redaction of Trans7, Titin Rosmasari accepted the suggestion of KPI and admitted that the contents of *Khazanah* have sensitive and controversial issues, which might offend particular Muslim organisations. She states that Trans7 will select topics for the contents of their programmes of propagation of Islam more carefully.[186] Although having promised to involve Muslim scholars from MUI in the mediation, the producers of *Khazanah* have not accomplished the promise. Ruwandanu argues that Trans7 have a number of Muslim scholars, involving in the production, and therefore they do not need to bring other Muslim scholars to supervise *dakwah* programmes in Trans7.[187]

Figure 4.2.: Mediation between members of NU and the producers of *Khazanah* Trans7 held by the KPI on April 17, 2013 at the Central Office of KPI in Jakarta. Source: www.kpi.go.id.

[186] Zaky Al Hamzah. April 2013. "KPI Peringatkan 'Khazanah Trans7' [KPI Warn Khazanah Trans7." http://www.republika.co.id/berita/koran/news-update/13/04/18/mleuqe-kpi-peringatkan-khazanah-trans7. Last accessed, December 8, 2016.
[187] Interview with Ruwandanu, Jakarta, April 5, 2016.

Another episode of *Khazanah* on Trans7, which had triggered a protest, was the program about Shi'ism and the Shiite in Indonesia. A Syiah Organisation, *Ikatan Jemaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia* or IJABI (the Association of the Followers of Ali bin Abu Tholib and his Family), reported the episode of *Khazanah* about Shia to KPI and demanded them to conduct mediation. KPI mediated between Trans7 and IJABI and invited MUI on November 7, 2013 in the central office of KPI. The secretary general of IJABI, Adi Bunardi, complained that the episode of *Khazanah* about Shia was unfair as it provided a one-sided and prejudicial opinion. Besides, it was full of inaccuracies and false stories, which might provoke hostility towards Shiites in Indonesia. After listening to the explanation of Titin Rosmasari, the chief editor of Trans7, the secretary general of IJABI urged Trans7 to apologise and arrange similar episode special for IJABI as clarification for the previous one. Trans7 responded that they needed a month to consider the requests. Adi Burnadi stated that if after a month he did not have the answer of the promises of Trans7, he would have brought the case to the court. On January 17, 2014, the producers of *Khazanah* on Trans7 broadcasted an episode entitled *Mencintai Rasulullah* (the Loving the Prophet of God) to fulfil the request of IJABI. In this episode, they invited the prominent scholar of Syiah, Jalaluddin Rahmat. He delivered a sermon about the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad and explains the birth of Syiah and its position to the Prophet.[188]

For Salafi followers, following the way of life of the Prophet Muhammad and the early Muslim men and women living in his period is very important including physical appearance. Identifying themselves as Salafis, men grow long beards, wear headscarves, turbans, and trousers right to their ankles, and women wear a form of enveloping black veil in public places (Hasan 2010: 301). The conflict concerning one of these physical appearances begins when one of the Salafi programmes of propagation of Islam stated that the Prophet Muhammad suggested Muslim men to grow their beards. Besides showing their masculinity, it is part of the Prophet Muhammad's tradition because the Prophet also had grown his beards during his lifetime. It is the way that Muslims perform their religion completely as written in the Quran that Muslim must convert to Islam perfectly.[189]

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[188] For the report of this mediation, see Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia. January 2014. "KPI Mediasi Ijabi dengan Trans7 soal Khazanah [KPI Mediate the Meeting between Ijabi and Trans7 about Khazanah programme]". http://kpi.go.id/index.php/lihat-terkini/38-dalam-negeri/31689-kpi-mediasi-ijabi-dengan-trans7-soal-khazanah. Last accessed, December 8, 2016.

[189] Mozaik Islam, *Serba-serbi menumbuhkan Jenggot* (various motivations to grow beard)

Some Muslims found this statement about growing beard is a sign of performing Islam perfectly is unreasonable since it is, in fact, a suggestion, not an obligation for Muslims from the prophet. The chairman of NU, Said Aqil Siradj, responded in one of his sermons that Muslims do not have to grow their beards because it is part of Arab culture. He mentioned several Indonesian Muslims scholars like Abdurrahman Wahid (d. 2009) and Nurcholis Madjid (d. 2005) as examples to support his statement that they did not grow their beards. He further asserts that what is suggested by Salafi preachers is part of Arabisation, not Islamisation and therefore Muslims in Indonesia must have their own characteristics different from those in the Arab world.[190] Khalid Basalamah, One of the Salafi preachers on Trans7, reacts to Said's statement that it is not about Arabisation. Instead, he further confirms that it is about following the prophet tradition; refusing to grow beard means refusing the Prophet.[191] In fact, it is clear in Islamic jurisprudence that suggestion or recommendation of the prophet Muhammad provides options for Muslims to obey or leave it. Those who obey it will be rewarded and those who do not are not sinful.

All the media captured this debate and exacerbated the reaction of Muslims resulting in some disagreement between different Muslim communities. Several talk shows on television invited actors, who have followed Salafism and grown their beards to deliver their opinions and feelings to be a loyal Salafi follower. Progressive Muslim scholars were also invited to discuss different interpretation of the related prophetic traditions.

The availability of Internet has enabled the debate regarding beards was discussed in Islamic learning groups, community radio and television, and mosques. This turned into a national discourse. Both parties attempt to convince Muslim congregation of their interpretations to occupy public discourses. In addition to these parties, there are several television preachers trying to redeem the conflict by explaining that the status of the prophetic traditions is merely suggestion. It is different from obligation. A suggestion can be neglected and those doing so are not sinful. Therefore, some Muslims may disagree to grow beards, while those, who decide to grow them, are rewarded by God.[192]

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episode, May 17, 2016.

[190] From a recorded video of the programme of *Satu Jam Lebih Dekat* (One Hour Closer) with Said Aqil Siradj on tvOne, December 1, 2015.

[191] For recorded document of Khalid Basalamah's reaction, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKIaeQy20DM, accessed on December 22, 2016.

[192] For the recorded document of News Islam Channels, see

In both regional and national election, television preachers have roles to influence Muslim attitudes in politics. Their involvement is unavoidable since they are one of the religious authorities in democratisation era. It can be intentionally for the preachers to discuss a particular topic concerning the coming election or unintentionally for them because they have to respond the questions from their audiences asking about the election. The debate of the election is mostly dominated by the issue of piety, gender, and non-Muslim leadership in the Muslim majority country.

Television preachers also had divided opinions concerning the presidential candidacy of Megawati in 2004. Some preachers on television urged Muslims not to elect her because of her gender. According to them, it is prohibited for Muslims to elect a woman as a leader in Islam based on the Quran and Hadiths.[193] Other television preachers countered their opinions while explaining to the audiences that the verses the Quran and Hadith concerning the prohibition of women to be leaders are not relevant to the presidential candidacy. All the verses and sayings of the Prophet refer to the prohibition to choose a woman as an imam in prayers. The debates on women leadership have continued since the presidential election in 2004 until now in regard with the women candidacy ranging from the election of regent to president in the country. For example, in 2011, the branch of MUI in Riau province had issued a fatwa prohibiting a woman taking a position of leadership. However, the central board of MUI in Jakarta have different opinion and have rejected the fatwa of MUI branch in Riau. Din Syamsuddin, the secretary general of MUI and the former chairman of Muhammadiyah, states that women leadership in Islam is debatable because Muslim scholars have different opinions about it. The central board of MUI are against the fatwa of MUI branch in Riau and has ordered them to withdraw it.[194]

The most recent political debates of the election involving television preachers are concerned with whether it is lawful to elect non-Muslim as a leader. Since 2012, the debates on non-Muslim candidacy have lasted when Jokowi and Basuki T. Purnama or Ahok were nominated as the candidate for the governor and the vice-governor of Jakarta. Beside the fact that Ahok is a Christian and Chinese descent, a rumour spread is that Jokowi is also not a

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UYVDUGnaYn4, accessed in July 10, 2016.

[193] For example, in Q.S. 4:34 "Men are in charge of women …".

[194] For more information, see DetikNews. June 2004. "MUI: Fatwa Haram Presiden Perempuan Tak Perlu Ditanggapi [MUI: Fatwa Prohibiting Women Becoming Presiden should not be Discussed]." http://news.detik.com/berita/160786/mui-fatwa-haram-presiden-perempuan-tak-perlu-ditanggapi. Last accessed, December 23, 2016.

Muslim. Therefore, it is forbidden in Islam to vote for him. They asked Muslims to vote for his rival, Fauzi Bowo, who was considered a pious and humble Muslim. The result of the election, however, sent Jokowi to be the governor of Jakarta and as the vice-governor. The same situation occurred when Jokowi decided to run the presidential election in 2014. Afterwards, the fierce debates of the election amongst television preachers are the candidacy of Ahok for governor election of Jakarta in 2017. These debates have begun earlier before the election after Ahok, the former vice-governor of Jokowi, announced his plan to run the governor election in 2017. His candidacy is controversial to Muslims because he is not a Muslim and is of Chinese descent. Anti-Chinese sentiment increased significantly from 1996 to 1999. People of Chinese descent in Jakarta often experienced harassment and violence in the riot of 1998 and the follow up until 1999. This sentiment has remained in the aftermath of reformation.[195] Moreover, his religion exacerbated the debates because as mentioned above Muslims are forbidden to vote for non-Muslim to be a leader.

In regard with this candidacy of Ahok, television preachers' opinions have varied. The majority of television preachers are in favour of Salafis that electing non-Muslims as leaders is forbidden in Islam. They refer to several verses of the Quran to justify their opinions. Amongst these preachers are Aa Gym, Yusuf Mansur, and Buya Yahya. The only television preacher who supported Muslims to elect non-Muslim as a leader is Maulana. He usually preaches in the *dakwah* programme of *Islam itu Indah* (Islam is Beautiful) on TransTV. In one of the episodes on November 9, 2015, he stated that it is lawful to elect women and non-Muslims as leaders because the election of leadership is nothing to do with religion (Islam). What is relevant to it is to choose a leader who can uphold justice and welfare for the people. His statement triggered reactions from other television preachers and Muslim organisations including MUI. A number of Muslims in Jakarta held a protest against him and urged him to apologise due to his statement, which was considered to hurt Muslims. Due to these reactions and protests, Maulana delivered his apology publicly in the central office of MUI and asks for guidance from them in his propagation of Islam.[196]

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[195] For more detailed discussion about the sentiment of anti-Chinese, see Jemma Purdey. 2005. *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996-1999.* Leiden: KITLV Press.

[196] Amri Amrullah. November 2015. "Ustadz Maulana: Maaf Bila Ceramah Saya ada yang Salah [Preacher Maulana, I apologise if my preaching is wrong]." http://khazanah.republika.co.id/berita/dunia-islam/islam-nusantara/15/11/19/ny178c334-ustaz-maulana-maaf-bila-ceramah-saya-ada-yang-salah. Last accessed, December 22, 2016.

On the contrary, the chairman of NU, Said Aqil Siradj, Muslims are allowed to choose a non-Muslim as their leader if the leader is fair and honest. In an interview session in his office in Jakarta, he stated that his statement about the possibility of Muslims to choose non-Muslims as leaders was nothing to do with Ahok's candidacy. He was merely eager to deliver what Ibnu Taymiyya, one of the prominent Muslim scholars, said that electing a fair non-Muslim is better than an unfair Muslim to be a leader. When further asked about the verses of the Quran prohibiting Muslims to choose non-Muslims as leaders, he stated that the context of the verses is if there are two candidates of leaders (one Muslim and the other is a non-Muslim), who are fair and honest, Muslims are forbidden to choose the non-Muslim candidate as a leader.[197]

Based on the above discussions, it is obvious that *dakwah* programmes through commercial television have become an arena for the preachers to define Muslim attitudes in contemporary Indonesia. They respond quickly to the trends in the society. Television media benefit from the reaction in terms of the ratings and audiences. The update topics of *dakwah* programmes through television concerning the debates in the society stimulate the audiences to watch and follow the programmes.

Conclusion

The appearance of Salafi *dakwah* programmes on private TV stations is novel to the extent that Salafism generally avoids commercial media platforms. Salafi followers prefer to arrange their own media for their *dakwah* like printed media, radio, and community TV channels. They consider commercial media tend to corrupt *dakwah* and mix it with material puposes. Rodja TV as one of Salafi community TV station in Indonesia sees it differently. National private TV stations are viewed by Rodja TV founders as opportunity for their *dakwah* and to eradicate misleading Islamic practices. They bring their programmes to national private TV stations, Trans7 and TransTV in which they correct the majority of Muslims' rituals. These rituals are practiced by the followers of NU. They also propagate on TV against the beliefs and practices by Shia followers. As a result, the conflict between the producers or preachers of Salafi *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 and TransTV and NU as well as Shia leaders cannot be avoided. This conflict proves the contestation of religious authority among them to obtain legitimacy and

[197] Interview with Said Aqil Siradj, Jakarta, May 6, 2016.

represent true Islam. NU and MUI see the presence of Salafism on Trans7 unacceptable because its ideology and agendas contradict theirs and the Indonesian state ideology. Salafi *dakwah* on TV render their agendas to become a mainstream discourse on private television is in line with the rise of their propagation in the society. It is evident that Rodja TV has attracted the attention of the programme producers in Trans7, who later become an entrance for Salafi preachers to dominate in the production of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7.

In defining Muslims' attitudes, the agendas of Salafi propagation of Islam in Trans7 oppose several Muslim organisations. As a result, their members have reacted and created debates in the society. The clash between Salafism and Muslim organisations like NU and IJABI in defining Muslim attitudes in *dakwah* programmes through television delineates three central points of Islam in contemporary Indonesia. Firstly, the reaction of NU towards the emergence of Salafism in *dakwah* programmes through television stations reminds us to the background of its establishment in 1926, which was a reaction to the rise of Wahhabism in the Middle East and its influence in the country. The current reaction of NU is also a response to the rise of Salafism through television. The clash between NU and Salafism depicts the contestation between Salafism promoting the concept of the globalised Islam. This means that Muslims in Indonesia are struggling to define themselves amongst their fellow Muslims in the world. Secondly, although its ideology is against that of the state and democracy, Salafi propagation of Islam of Rodja TV has benefited from the democratic system of the state, especially the freedom of expression. It makes the Salafi leaders possible to propagate their agendas including re-establishment of Islamic state in Indonesia. Finally, the rise of tension between two opposing parties in *dakwah* programmes on television stations has forced the government through KPI to reinforce its role as the monitoring institution of the broadcasting.

Chapter 5

WATCHING PRACTICES OF *DAKWAH* ON TV IN EVERYDAY LIVES

The previous chapter explores the agendas of Salafi *dakwah* on Trans7 and TransTV in order to understand the contestation of religious authority on TV and in society. The discourses and debates surrounding the Salafi *dakwah* on TV reveals the disputes among Islamic authorities to define what are the legitimate practices of Islam. In respect to religious authority, it is also pivotal to understand how *dakwah* programmes on TV are consumed by the audiences and how they react to the programmes. Therefore, this chapter elaborates on the watching practice and reactions of audiences to *dakwah* programmes to understand their reception in society. I will argue that the daily reception of *dakwah* through TV stations forms alternative religious authorities for Muslims in contrast to the traditional religious authority which is dominated by NU, Muhammadiyah, and MUI. Moreover, the reactions towards the discourses of *dakwah* on TV in the form of public debates prove the contribution of *dakwah* programmes on TV to the fragmentation of religious authorities (Eickelman and Anderson 1999).

This chapter begins by discussing several relevant studies of television consumption in Indonesia to understand the attitude of watching TV among Indonesian audiences. Afterwards, I discuss the cases of watching *dakwah* programmes in Jakarta, Medan, and Bali. Further, I explain the characteristics of the audiences of *dakwah* programmes on TV and their formation in the society. Furthermore, I analyse the audiences' perception of *dakwah* programmes. Lastly, it deals with how *Tanya Jawab* (Question-Answer/Q&A) section of the programmes forms alternative religious authority and play an important role in public discourses and debates on Islam in the society.

Watching *dakwah* on TV

There have been few studies on watching television practice in Indonesia. For example, Loven (2008) has investigated the audience's interpretation of *Si Doel*, an Indonesina soap opera, which was broadcast on the first commercial television RCTI, in 1994. Using Fairclough's (1995) concept of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Loven studied the audience's language

interpretation articulated in the dialogue of *Si Doel* to understand cultural ideology expressed through it. One of the findings suggests that *Si Doel* mediated and promoted Betawi Malay language to the public. Betawi refers to one of the languages spoken by the inhabitants in the city of Jakarta. It is also known as Jakarta Malay or Batavian Malay language. Another example is Nilan's study on the audience of *Telenovela*, a soap opera, in Bali (Nilan 2001). The study explores gender and women's engagement as an audience watching *Telenovela*. She found that watching *Telenovela* in Bali represents gender and women's involvement 'with textual representations which are inflected by class and fractured by religious and political tensions.' (Nilan 2001: 95). Rakhmani observed the audience of Islamic soap operas on Indonesian TV channels. In her study, she discussed the discourses and debates among the audience about religious modernisation and limited pluralism (Rakhmani 2016: 132–161). However, her study does not include *dakwah* programmes on TV which are important if we want to understand how Islamic discourse and debates on TV and in the society influence each other. In this respect, this chapter attempts to continue the aforementioned studies by observing the watching practice of *dakwah* programmes on TV.

TV audiences receive a set of programmes from TV stations leaving them to choose what is provided by the TV producers. In this respect, watching TV can be considered as active attitude because the audiences are able to choose what they want to watch. At the same time, it can also be regarded as passive attitude because actually they can only choose what programmes available, they watch TV at that time. It is the same situation in watching *dakwah* on TV because it is broadcast at the same time in various TV stations leaving audiences with limited choices. Since the contents of *dakwah* programmes on TV are repetitive, the audiences of *dakwah* programmes on TV can easily become involved in the making of discourses and debates of Islam in the public through their reaction to particular topics. Their involvement can occur through the questions they were asking during the programmes or their commentaries on the programmes especially regarding the disagreement against what was delivered by the TV preachers. In other words, religious advice from TV preachers is received by the audience in different ways. Some of them agree and do the advice, some ignore it, and others disagree and debate it (Hobart 2006: 281).

MAny of the audiences watch *dakwah* on TV as well as entertainment programmes as part of their everyday activities. They enjoy the images, fun stories and emotions in *dakwah* programmes on TV, which are combined with

religious advice about how to be a good husband or wife in Islam, how to be successful Muslims, what Muslims should do to go to heavenand so on. The audience may have different perception of the particular topic delivered by the preacher in the programme, but they still may enjoy the entertaining parts of it. The entertainin part of *dakwah* programmes on TV is obvious even for non-Muslims, who like watching them every day. For example, a non-Muslim friend in Medan, Asken, tells a story of his mother, who always watches *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* on Indosiar in the morning because she likes the entertaining style of Mamah Dedeh. .[198] The audiences can be entertained through the performance of the preachers, their appearance, rhetoric or stories.

On the other hand, they can obtain new insights and information of the teachings of Islam that may be useful for them to enhance their faith and morality or to eimprove their daily rituals. To the audience, it is generally an effort to be educated and entertained at the same time.[199] However, assuming that the audiences will automatically behave in accordance with what the preachers said in the *dakwah* programmes is misleading. Some audiences ignore, disagree, or debate what they heard from the programmes. In this respect, the notion of audience engagement implies an active practice in which the audience have their own decision to make based the messages and images they receive (Ang 1991 and Horrocks and Kolinsky 1996).

For example, Wahyu in Medan watches *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* on Indosiar in the same restaurant near the University of North Sumatera every morning at the same time. He is a forty-five years old driver of *Becak Montor* or *Bentor* (Motorcycle Pedi cab). He graduated from Senior High School. He did not continue his education to university level because his parents were poor. After I saw him in the restaurant three times, I introduced myself and started a chat with him about the programme. In my opinion, Wahyu enjoyed watching *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* very much. He laughed every time he heard Abdel or Mamah Dedeh make a joke or tell funny stories. He told me that *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* on is his favourite programme. Wahyu often asks the restaurant owner to switch to *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* programme when he comes in for meals. He likes watching the programme because it is attractive in the way it is designed: the opening song, colourful costumes of the live female audiences in the studio, gestures that they make during the broadcast of the programme and the rhetorical skill of the host and the preacher of the

[198] Interview with Asken, Medan, January 16, 2015.
[199] Interview with Hamdan, Medan, January 17, 2015.

programme. In regards to the Islamic messages in the programme, he asserts that he neglects what the preacher delivers. He is a pious Muslim who performs prayers five times a day and fulfils his obligations as a Muslim.[200] I also found the same kind of audiences in Jakarta, who only enjoy the entertainment part of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* in Indosiar. They do not take into account of what Mamah Dedeh delivers in her programme. This means that this type of audience watches *dakwah* programmes on TV only for entertainment. They watch them because they like the decoration of the stage, host and preacher, live audiences, and articulation of the messages with jokes or funny stories. In this respect, Islamic advice and teachings in the programmes are not of primary importance.

On the other hand, some audiences take the messages delivered in the programmes into account to improving their faith, piety, and morality in their everyday lives. When I went to Jakarta to do fieldwork in 2015 and 2016, I contacted several high school friends of mine from Jakarta, who always read Aa Gym's preaching through books, magazines, and novels, when they were studying with me in Islamic senior high school (MAN) in Cipasung, Tasikmalaya, West Java. I wondered if they still read Aa Gym's preaching, especially for female friends after Aa Gym decided to marry a second wife. Nahida was one of them. She is a 31-years-old wife and business woman with two children. She sells hijabs and halal cosmetic products to help her husband financially, who works in the Indonesian Immigration Office in Jakarta. Her husband was her school friend in MAN Cipasung. She told me that she returned to Jakarta after she finished her study at Islamic boarding school and MAN Cipasung in Tasikmalaya to continue her study in business management at the University of Indonesia. Her appearance is still the same showing piety and modesty with big hijab, which covers her hair and much of her torso. I asked her whether she still listened to Aa Gym's preaching. She responded that she no longer did, as Aa Gym became a celebrity for Indonesian television stations. He became implicated in gossiping – something which, according to her, is forbidden in Islam.

More recently, Nahida prefers to watch *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi*. She likes the programme because the messages and advice are mostly about household matters and the ways to educate children in Islam. She explains that her husband likes it too and therefore they often watch the programme together in the morning before her husband goes to work. I asked whether she does what Mamah Dedeh said in the programme like what she did to what Aa

[200] Interview with Wahyu, Medan, January 15, 2015.

Gym said when she was in senior high school. She answers that she strives to be consistent to behave in accordance with what she listens from Mamah Dedeh like teaching her children how to read the Quran correctly and *Salawat* (Prayers for the Prophet Muhammad) in order to make them devout Muslims.[201] There are some audiences, who listen to the advice delivered by the preachers of the *dakwah* programmes on TV in Jakarta and Medan. They listen to the programmes and preachers every day in houses and other places and try to act based on what they hear from the programmes. In this respect, the audience perceive the preachers of the programmes as the sources of Islamic knowledge where the audience refer to deal with daily matters concerning their religion.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the messages of programmes of propagation of Islam on television in some cases turn into public debates because the audiences have different interpretations about the contents. The interpretation of the audiences concerning a particular case in *dakwah* programmes on television is determined by their political understanding. It happens also in the audiences' responses towards soap operas and films in Indonesia (Nilan 2001: 86 and Sen 2000: 9–10). The influence of the audiences' political understanding in *dakwah* programmes on television in Indonesia can be found in the formulation of questions delivered during Question-Answer section as discussed in the next section of this chapter. The questions are formulated based on the current issues in the society brought by the audience to the programmes to seek answers or justifications from the preachers, who are considered knowledgeable in Islam by the audience. The questions are not only influenced by their political understanding, but also social and cultural one concerning what happens in the society.

Like watching other television programmes, the attitude of watching for the audiences of propagation of Islam on television is typically busy with everyday activities such as eating (breakfast, dinner, or snacks), talks between viewers, child-care duties, and household tasks (Nilan 2001: 85). I found that watching for Indonesian audiences is complementary activity, which is considered useful and attractive to improve piety and entertain their daily life at the same time. As I mentioned in chapter 1, many activities of propagation of Islam in Indonesian society are combined with entertainment events and the messages of the propagation includes jokes and humorous stories (Millie 2017). This form of propagation of Islam is brought and modified to television by the preachers and producers for the audiences. In the coming

[201] Interview with Nahida, Jakarta, March 15, 2015.

section, I elucidate the activity of watching *dakwah* programmes on television from the field in Medan, Jakarta, and Bali.

Audience in Medan and Jakarta

During my fieldwork in Medan 2015 and 2016, I lived with Agus, one of my nephew's lecturers, who works in the faculty of Islamic Law at North Sumatra State Islamic University. Initially, I had asked my nephew, who to find me a place to stay during my observation in Medan. My nephew introduced me to Agus when we meet at his office. Agus is about forty years old and teaches the sciences of Hadith and Quran in the faculty of Islamic Law at the university. He has two children. I told him that I was conducting a research project on propagation of Islam on television. He responded that he liked several *dakwah* programmes on TV stations. It is interesting to know that someone, who has sufficient knowledge of Islam and teaches in Islamic university, likes to watch *dakwah* programmes on television. Agus stated that he was delighted to meet me and want me to share my experience and knowledge about studying abroad.[202] We drove to his house, which was about 30 minutes away, where I then met his wife and children.

Agus invited me to have dinner together with his family at a table with six chairs next to the living room where there was also a Television. During dinner, the television was on, showing a news programme on TVOne. The conversation during the dinner was about my life story because Agus and his wife wanted to know more about my background. Afterhaving dinner, Agus and I went to a mosque in the neighbourhood for our evening prayers. After our evening prayer, Agus' family watched a comedy programme on Trans7. They sometimes switched the channel to other television channels like NET, RCTI, and so forth to find other more interesting comedy programmes.

In the morning, Agus's family began their activities at 5am. They conducted the dawn prayer together at home. Afterwards, his wife, Ida prepared their breakfast in the kitchen while Agus read several verses of the Quran in the living room and the children took a bath. They watched, *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* on Indosiar while having breakfast at around 6am. I had breakfast with them. Agus shared his opinion about the programme during breakfast even though I did not ask him because he knew my research project. He stated that he preferred the programme of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* to others because the topics were up to date and because of Mamah Dedeh herself. He

[202] Interview with Agus, Medan, January 1, 2015.

explained that Mamah Dedeh had deep Islamic knowledge to support her sermons and answer to the questions that Muslims asked during the programme. I asked him what kind of questions, he asserted that the problems varied and addressed to different levels of ages. Mamah Dedeh can deal with all of them.[203]

We talked casually while eating our breakfast. Agus and his family did not focus on the programme at the time because he chatted during breakfast. The topic of our conversation varied not only about propagation of Islam but also about his children's school, neighbours, and the city of Medan. On the second and third day, I did not have breakfast with them. I wanted to check whether or not they watched the same programme. They did but they enjoyed their conversation on the table as usual.

A similar attitude to watching *dakwah* programmes applied to Halimah's house in Pasar Minggu, Jakarta where I stayed during my fieldwork in Jakarta. Halimah, a 33-year-old housewife and a seller of mobile phone, whom I have mentioned in chapter 3. Halimah, watched a programme of propagation of Islam, *Indahnya Kebersamaan* (Beauty of Togetherness) on SCTV at 4 am in the morning with her families while preparing breakfast. Her husband (35 years old) was sitting on the chair in their small living room watching the same programme. He was ready with his uniform as a security in a manufacturing company in North Jakarta. After the breakfast was ready, they sat on the floor together in front of the television set to have breakfast and watch the programme. I was watching them from my bedroom behind the table where I sat with my notebook. I was facing the living room. I intentionally opened the door to see their activities in the morning. They chatted and watched the programme of propagation of Islam at the same time. They smiled and laughed whenever they watched or heard fun statements from the preacher. Halimah sometimes discussed the preacher's cloth, background, and wealth, with her husband.

After breakfast, the husband went to his office and Halimah took their children to school. She went to her mobile phone shop from school, which is not far from her house. In her small shop, she often watches *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* on a 10-inch portable television set while waiting for and serving the costumers. This was where I first met her when I bought seom phone credit for my mobile phone. I had observed her activities in that shop for three days from a small restaurant across the street from her shop before I asked to rent a room in her house during my fieldwork in Jakarta.

[203] Interview with Agus, Medan, January 2, 2015.

In small restaurants in Jakarta and Medan where I usually had breakfast during my fieldwork, people often watched *dakwah* programmes. The owners of the restaurants chose the programmes for their customers. Customers usually would not complain or ask the channel to be changed. I found once that one of the customers of the small restaurant in Medan was non-Muslim but he enjoyed watching *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* while having breakfast. In an interview after having breakfast, Sinaga, a 42-year-old taxi driver, explained that:

> I find it (the programme of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* on Indosiar) funny and entertaining to watch. I enjoy the jokes that the host and preacher make. I am a Christian and, in my opinion, it is important to know others' religion to avoid misunderstanding. No wonder there is many Islamic programmes on television because Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world. No problem with that for me as long as we can live together in harmony and peace like in this city (Medan).[204]

Entertainment plays an important part in the marketability of *dakwah* programmes on TV to attract audiences throughout the country (Chapter 2). In this respect, they are attractive for not only Muslims but also non-Muslims. A Christian friend of mine in Jakarta found her mother to have the same opinion as Sinaga's. She told me that her mother watches the programme of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* every morning while cleaning her house. She stated that the programme and preacher entertained her. She laughed whenever the host and preacher made jokes and concentrated whenever she heard statements or questions that are of her interests.[205]

To Muslims' audience in the small restaurants in Jakarta and Medan, what the owners of the restaurants watch does not matter. They just enjoy watching television while eating. They do so at their homes too. In a short conversation after breakfast, Kurnia, a 32-year-old staff in a Tax Office Headquarter at Jati Padang Street near the restaurant in Pasar Minggu, explained that he just liked the images on television: the women in nice clothes, as well as this the songs and tunes played by the Islamic band were good to listen to. The jokes told by the host and preacher were natural and inoffensive. [206]

[204] Interview with Sinaga, Medan, January 5, 2015.
[205] A conversation with Yvonne, Jakarta, March 22, 2015.
[206] Interview with Kurnia, Jakarta, March 14, 2015.

Many of the customers of the restaurants came to eat with their friends. Similarly, with Agus's and Halimah's families, they ate while watching TV and chatting. They shared their opinions about the preacher's statements. I was sitting behind them when a customer of the restaurant in Jakarta began to chat with his friends:

> Customer 1: *Mamah Dedeh* is clever and firm. She answers the questions from the audience firmly and is straight to the point (*tidak suka basa-basi*). Her programmes last longer than any other *dakwah* programmes on television. May be because Muslim women like it. Just see Muslim women who attend her live performance. There are different groups every day.
>
> Customer 2: are those live audiences paid to attend the programme like those who attend music shows on television? Or they pay to appear on the programme?
>
> Customer 3: I do not think so. People in Indonesia like to appear on television. Perhaps the television has a long list of groups who want to attend the programme.

The opinion expressed by customer 1 often appeared when viewers were watching *dakwah* programmes on TV. It was a casual statement about their feelings. Such expression usually emerges after they have watched the programmes several times. The same situation applies to customer 2 and 3, who expressed his curiosity and opinion. These opinions and questions imply that the viewers have their perceptions about what they watch and hear even though the main activity of watching is just to enjoy the performance. They also reflect what they see to their experience like what customer 2 did in the chat above.

Rusmidin, the owner of the restaurant in Medan, chose *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* as a means to learn more about Islam and to propagate Islamic teachings to his customers. In response to my question whether or not he was worried if non-Muslims would not buy food from his restaurant because he watched the programme, Rusmidin (37 years old) answered:

> I do not care about that. I believed (that) profit of my business came from Allah (not from the programme that I chose to watch). My intention of watching the programme was to learn and spread of propagation of Islam. If there were non-Muslims coming to the

> restaurant for breakfast, might they get direction from Allah to convert to Islam. If they do not, it does not matter.[207]

To learn Islam from watching the *dakwah* programmes on TV is a common purpose, expressed by several respondents. For example, Widodo, a 32 years old teacher in one of Junior High Schools in Medan, has the same opinion as Rusmidin's. He watched programmes of propagation of Islam to improve his Islamic knowledge. He argued that television programmes, which had education values, were rare in Indonesia. He usually watched programmes of propagation of Islam in the morning and sometimes in the night. He watched any kind of *dakwah* programmes on TV.[208] Halimah also explained that her intention was to study Islamic teachings from the programme of propagation of Islam. She hopes that God rewards her with the blessing for her businesses with a lot of profit.[209] Profit here not merely means money. Rusmidin and Halimah believe that profit from God can be in forms of health for their families, success for their children, and so on.

Audience in Bali

The findings in Denpasar show a different picture, from those in Jakarta and Medan. I did my observation in the neighbourhood of Teuku Umar Street, Denpasar and *Kampung Bugis* (Bugis area) in Kuta. Most of the family in both areas are Muslims. Their ancestors came to Bali from East Java, South Sulawesi, and other provinces in Indonesia. Some of Muslims in Bali are Hadhramis, descendants of Indonesia's Arab immigrants.[210]

During my stay in Denpasar, I lived with my 29 years old cousin, Nani. She is from East Java. She worked in a restaurant and her husband, Nurman (30 years old), works as a tour guide. They have a two years-old son. A baby sitter took care of him while their parents were at work. They never watched *dakwah* programmes on TV at home. They watched news or reality shows. The Muslims in Denpasar that I interviewed did not watch *dakwah* programmes on TV. Some stated that the reason was that they have already started their work at offices, shops, restaurants, and so on when *dakwah*

[207] Interview with Rusmidin, Medan, January 9, 2015.
[208] Interview with Widodo, Medan, January 3, 2015.
[209] Interview with Halimah, Jakarta, September 20, 2014.
[210] For more discussion of Hadhramis and the map of Muslim areas in Bali, see Martin Slama. 2005). "Orang Indonesia Keturunan Hadramaut di Bali: Masyarakat Diaspora dalam Perbandingan [Indonesians with Arabic Hadramaut descendants in Bali: Diaspora community in comparison]." *Masyarakat Indonesia: Majalah Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial Indonesia*, XXXI (2): 1-24.

programmes are aired on TV. Their opinion is understandable because local time in Bali is a head one hour of that in Java.[211] Others said that they prefer *dakwah* from established Muslim scholars from NU and Muhammadiyah because they have legitimate Islamic knowledge.[212]

Many Muslims in Denpasar and Kuta work as travel agents or traders. They also open restaurants, cafes and shops, which sell souvenirs for tourists. Some work as civil servants in government offices. Unlike in Jakarta and Medan, I did not find that the owners or caretakers of small restaurants or coffee shops in Denpasar and Kuta that I visited choose to watch *dakwah* programmes. Instead, they preferred to watch news programmes on TV in their restaurants. Hadi (38 years old), the owner of a small restaurant at Teuku Umar Street in Denpasar, stated that he did not choose to watch *dakwah* programmes in his restaurant because he wanted to welcome all customers, not only Muslims. He selected a news programme on local television stations in order to keep up to date with recent news about what is happening in Bali which might influence his business. For example, he wanted up-to-date news about the prices of vegetables and ingredients in traditional markets in Denpasar.[213] We can also easily identify restaurants owned by Muslims in Denpasar and Kuta by looking at their names. If Hadi is worried about hesitancy or rejection from Hindu customers because of watching Islamic programmes, he would not have attributed his restaurant with the word 'Muslim'.

During my observation in Jakarta and Medan, I found public announcements and advertisements on roads and streets about upcoming Islamic gatherings where famous would be present. Their names appeared on banners and billboards. However, I did not find any of them in Denpasar and Kuta. I asked Hadi whether there are Islamic gatherings around Denpasar. He responded that the gatherings are held on mosques, never in a big hall or field like in Java because Muslims are afraid of such events will offend their Hindu neighbours (*menyinggung perasaan tetangga yang beragama Hindu*).[214] His statement indicates there are worries among Muslims to offend Hindus for what they do in everyday life.

When I visited Bali for the second time, I contacted Jatmiko, a 45-year-old tour guide through his account on Facebook.[215] I found his name when I

[211] Interview with Rafi, Denpasar, March 1, 2015.
[212] Interview with Rohil, Denpasar, March 3, 2015.
[213] Interview with Hadi, Denpasar, March 5, 2015.
[214] Interview with Hadi, Denpasar, March 5, 2015.
[215] https://www.facebook.com/muslimtours, accessed on 29 November 2017.

was browsing Muslim travel agencies on Facebook. Jatmiko, originally from Central Java, owns a business called Bali Muslim Tours in Denpasar. He helped me to find an accommodation and motorbike during my stay in the Muslim areas in Kuta – a popular area for domestic and international tourists. When he knew that I came to Bali to do ethnographical research, Jatmiko offered his house for my accommodation during my stay in Bali. His house is also located in Muslim areas in Kuta. His wife works at their souvenir shop every day. He has two sons: one is already married and works as civil servant in Negara, the capital city of Jembrana regency, Bali. His other son studies at Udayana University. There was a room in his house. At the time I came, the room was vacant, which Jatmiko offered to me.

He told me that he often accompanied domestic and international Muslim tourists from Java, who wanted to visit Islamic heritage and the tombs of Muslim saints in Bali.[216] He also helped Muslim travellers to find halal restaurants and hotels in Bali. He showed me several Muslim restaurants, hotels, shops and other tourism businesses in Kuta. My impression is that he has made strong connections with the owners of these tourism businesses, some of whom are Hindus. When I asked about the reason why he had good relation with businesses run by Hindus, he explained:

> In business matters in Bali, we (Muslims) must have good relation with Hindus here because they are the majority of the population. Besides, it is important for them to know us as Muslims from this relationship, especially after Bali bombings (2002), in order to avoid hatred and prejudice. They (Hindus) are also glad because we trust them. They often ask me about Islam directly and I explain to them. This is important rather than they know it from media. However, I make relation with them only for souvenirs, not for food and hotels.[217]

In this respect, Jatmiko's attempt to embrace the majority of the population is seen as a strategy to extend his tour company because of limited Muslim souvenir shops available in Kuta. It can also be seen as a strategy to save his company from the issue of the implementation of Sharia tourism in Bali by the central government in Jakarta. Jatmiko limited his business relation with Hindus to souvenirs is understandable because many Muslims are often strict

[216] For the study of Balinese Muslim saints, see Syaifuddin Zuhri. 2013. "Inventing Balinese Muslim Sainthood." *Indonesia and the Malay World* 41 (119): 1-13.
[217] Interview with Jatmiko, Kuta, May 5, 2016.

in regards to food and hotels. Most of them want halal food and hotels, which have *Kiblat*[218].

During my stay in his house, the members of the house never watched *dakwah* programmes. They rarely turned on the television set in their living room. I saw Jatmiko watching news programmes several times. When I interviewed him why he did not watch television often, he stated that he had no time for that because he had to find customers and serve them. His wife also worked until 9pm. His youngest son worked part time in a restaurant. Clients often asked him to drive until late at night.[219] When I assumed that there might be some Muslims in Bali, who watch *dakwah* programmes on TV, Jatmiko responded that I did not know for sure. He said that 'maybe there are some. However, most are busy with their jobs, trying to make a living.'[220]

I found a similar situation amongst young Muslims, most of whom were university students in several campuses in Jakarta, Medan, and Bali. They had a television set in their dormitory buildings, but they rarely used it to watch programmes of propagation of Islam. For instance, Arif, a 23-year-old student of North Sumatra State Islamic University argued that he and his friends never watched *dakwah* programmes because they were broadcast in the morning when most of the students were asleep or had gone to their campuses. They preferred to watch football matches on television. Further, he noted concerning my question about his opinion about the programmes that the broadcast of propagation of Islam through television was significant for Muslims because they could access Islamic education at home.[221] This is a common opinion that I found during interviews with university students in Medan, Jakarta, Denpasar, and Kuta.

Several studies have shown that many Muslim students in campuses are actively involved in propagation of Islam. They organise propagation of Islam forums to study Islam together in university mosques, classes, and public spaces in their campuses. They often invite preachers to come to their campuses to preach Islam (Hasan 2013: 4 and Rosyad 2006). In response to this fact, Zainal, a 25 years old student at Indonesian University, asserted that many Muslim students prefer to study Islam from student organisations in their campuses such as *Lembaga Dakwah Kampus* or LDK (the Institute for

[218] The term 'kiblat' is originally from the word 'qibla' in Arabic, which means the direction that Muslims should face when they are performing prayers. The direction of the face leads to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.
[219] Interview with Jatmiko, Kuta, May 7, 2016.
[220] Interview with Jatmiko, Kuta, May 7, 2016.
[221] Interview with Arif, Medan, January 25, 2015.

Propagation of Islam in Campus) and other small groups of Islamic pedagogy and from the Internet rather than television.[222] My observation in the campuses in Medan and Jakarta shows that the preachers that they invited, have Salafi backgrounds and some of them become preachers on Rodja TV and Trans7 as discussed in chapter 4. This finding means that there is a strong connection between propagation of Islam on television and in campuses. Muslim students consume the products of *dakwah* programmes on TV by inviting their preachers to their circles and learning groups. As discussed in Chapter 3, the broadcast of programmes of propagation of Islam have become a moment to promote new preachers to the society.

The combination of watching *dakwah* programmes on TV with other activities in Jakarta and Medan proved that watching programme of propagation of Islam was not the main activity for the audiences. They consider it as an entertainment, which also has some education value. The audiences in Jakarta and Medan enjoyed the style of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi*. At the same time, they listened to the messages of the programmes. They paused their activities a little bit and glanced over the television when they heard and found the message meaningful or entertaining. They also talked to each other about the topics, hosts, preachers, and other things related to the programme that they were watching. Those activities are inseparable from a single process of watching programmes of propagation of Islam. The audiences' experiences in Jakarta, Medan, Denpasar, and Kuta show that the attitude of watching *dakwah* programmes is an active and social activity. They can decide which programmes that they want to watch or not to watch at all like in Denpasar and Kuta. If they watch, they will do together.

Audience of *dakwah* on TV in the society

The previous findings about the audiences of *dakwah* programmes on TV in Medan and Jakarta shed light on their formation in the society. The audiences of *dakwah* programmes on TV consist of not only Muslims but also non-Muslims, whom also enjoy watching the programmes. Non-Muslims watch propagation of Islam through television due to its entertaining nature. It can be regarded as being beneficial for both Islamic and commercial industry. The use of television as an instrument for propagation of Islam and its creative formats for television broadcast makes it accessible to non-Muslims either in private and public spaces. To commercial television companies, it is

[222] Interview with Zainal, Jakarta, February 17, 2015.

important at least to increase their popularity among national audience. They benefit from a high fee that can be charged for advertising.

Based on the descriptions above, I found that the audiences of the *dakwah* programmes on TV are middle-class Muslims. It is not to say that working class Muslims do not watch the programmes but it is the middle-class which engage with in terms of discourses and debates of the *dakwah* programmes in the public sphere. The rise of Indonesian middle class happened in the beginning of the twenty-first century marked by Indonesian democratisation and globalisation (Rinaldo 2008: 23-39 and Rakhmani 2016: 5–11). The rise of middle class in the most populous Muslim country in the world triggers commercial industries including television to meet their demands of modern lifestyle, which later shape their identity (Hasan 2013: 143–178). *Dakwah* programmes on TV serve their demand of Islamic products together with cinema (Izharuddin 2017), fashion (Bucar 2017: 74–122), space and time during special month of Ramadan (Schmidt 2017: 25–54), and social media (Nisa 2018: 66–99). Middle class Muslims have played an important role as the consumers of Islamic products. They encourage commercial television industries to produce such Islamic programmes as propagation of Islam.

In terms of age, the audiences of *dakwah* programmes on TV vary widely. They are made up of university students, young adults and adults from middle class families. Many of them are highly educated. They own houses, motorbikes or cars and send their children to expensive schools. They have their own shops and restaurants. However, this finding does not mean that kids and teenagers do not watch the programmes. They may watch them with their families and friends. Like other television programmes, propagation of Islam can capture diverse audiences, who share common interests.

In regards to gender, much of the audience of *dakwah* programmes on TV are women. They watch the programmes by attending the broadcast in the studios and mosques or at homes with their families and friends. Some programmes of propagation of Islam are broadcast live with the presence of audience, whom are mostly women, on the stage. This audience comes from different Islamic study groups from throughout Java and parts of Sumatra. In the case of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi*, the audiences have to register for the waiting list to attend the programme live in the Indosiar studio. At home, women usually initiate to watch a programme of propagation of Islam for their families or friends.

The enthusiasm of women to attend Islamic learning session is not new. The finding of this chapter about the dominance of women in watching or attending *dakwah* programmes on TV reflects their consumption of Islamic preaching in the society. For example, many Muslim women in Bandung, West Java, can attend three to five Islamic preaching or gatherings a week (Millie 2011: 151–169). This also applies to many Muslim women in Jakarta, Medan, and Bali. Besides watching *dakwah* programmes on TV, they attend Islamic learning gatherings in their communities regularly.

Their presence in preaching events either in their communities or in the studios of television companies should be understood in a wider sense than just to get Islamic knowledge from the preachers. They build and expand their business network, are involved in economic activities and promote a consumerist lifestyle. According to several informants, who attend *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* live in the studio, every Islamic study group have three to five uniforms which they wear for special events such as the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad or attending programmes of propagation of Islam in television studios. Some of them sell and buy dresses or makeup from each other.[223]

This evidence shows that watching *dakwah* programmes on TV is part of pious consumption of religious commodification. Audiences see *dakwah* programmes on TV as a product promoted and offered to the Muslim market like clothes, makeup, movies and so on in which portray a complex process of negotiation between Islamism and commercialism. It is therefore intriguing to know how the end of this negotiation in the case of *dakwah* programmes on TV in Indonesia. This will be explored in the coming sections.

Consumption of *dakwah* on TV

Watching *dakwah* programmes on TV is part of the activity of consumption of 'Islamic' products, which are addressed to Muslims in Indonesia. The term 'Islamic' here refers to two different meanings. Firstly, it means any product, which has halal certificate on it. Halal here means that there is no ingredient in the product, which is forbidden by Islamic Jurisprudence based on the Quran and hadiths. Of the forbidden ingredients in Islam is anything made of the substance containing pork or dog meat. Besides, Muslims are also forbidden to eat meat which is not slaughtered with the name of God. Some

[223] Interview with the live audience of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi*, Jakarta, February 20, 2015.

of the verses of the Quran, which explain halal food are Q.S. 2: 173 and Q.S. 16: 66.

Secondly, it means the products, which are considered to be able to improve piety and morality of Muslims. These products include fashion, banking, healing and others. We can witness the growth of Muslim women's fashion in shopping mall and online shops. Many conventional banks have also opened sharia-based branches to accommodate Muslims' demand for Islamic banking system. One such requirement is to have economic transaction without interest. Several Islamic banks are established to meet the demands. Some Muslims in Indonesia prefer to have health treatment based on the Prophet's methods.[224] Some of popular health treatments in Indonesia, which are claimed to root from the Prophet's traditions, are medicines, which are made of honey or olive oil. Some Muslims in Indonesia believe that these materials were used by the Prophet Muhammad for medicines. To Muslims in Indonesia, all these efforts is to improve their piety.

The demand of Islamic products in Indonesia is high and many investors and business companies want to benefit from the popularity of Islamic branding. Middle class Muslim have been the segment of the population targeted by companies for the reassurance of profitable businesses because they only buy products which are labelled as halal. As a result, many companies, which sell their products in Muslim countries like Indonesia and Malaysia, want to obtain halal certificate from Islamic authorities to be attractive to middle-class Muslims. This certificate is also demanded by some Muslims, who live in western countries like in The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and England (Shirazi 2016: 199 and Barkin 2013: 1-24).

Many middle-class Muslims in Indonesia believe that foreign products have better quality than local ones, but they have doubts whether or not their ingredients or materials are halal. By the label of halal on the products, they are sure that such products are halal to consume. Apart from food, perfume, soap, shampoo and other products also require halal certification. In respect of the *dakwah* programmes on TV, several foreign products with halal labels become the sponsors of the programmes. With the halal labels and the advert by television preachers, the audience is expected to be interested to use the products.

[224] Agung Sasongko. March 2018. "Pengobatan Ala Rasulullah [Healing Like the Prophet's]." http://khazanah.republika.co.id/berita/dunia-islam/islam-digest/18/03/02/p4yfo5313-pengobatan-ala-rasulullah. Last accessed, March 15, 2018.

Many celebrities, who decide to improve their religiosity by leaving their careers as an actor, actress, or singer, engage in preaching and selling Islamic dresses and halal cosmetics. They set up businesses like boutiques, restaurants and other kinds of products on their names and advertising them in the media. Some become brand ambassadors for foreign products. For example, Zaskia Sungkar,[225] an actor and singer, sells Islamic fashion including hijab and dress for Muslim women in social media after they are committed to Islam in 2014 (see Figure 5.1.). Many audiences of *dakwah* programmes on TV buy her products because they are popular. They argue that the fashion products offered by celebrities are both fashionable and Islamic.

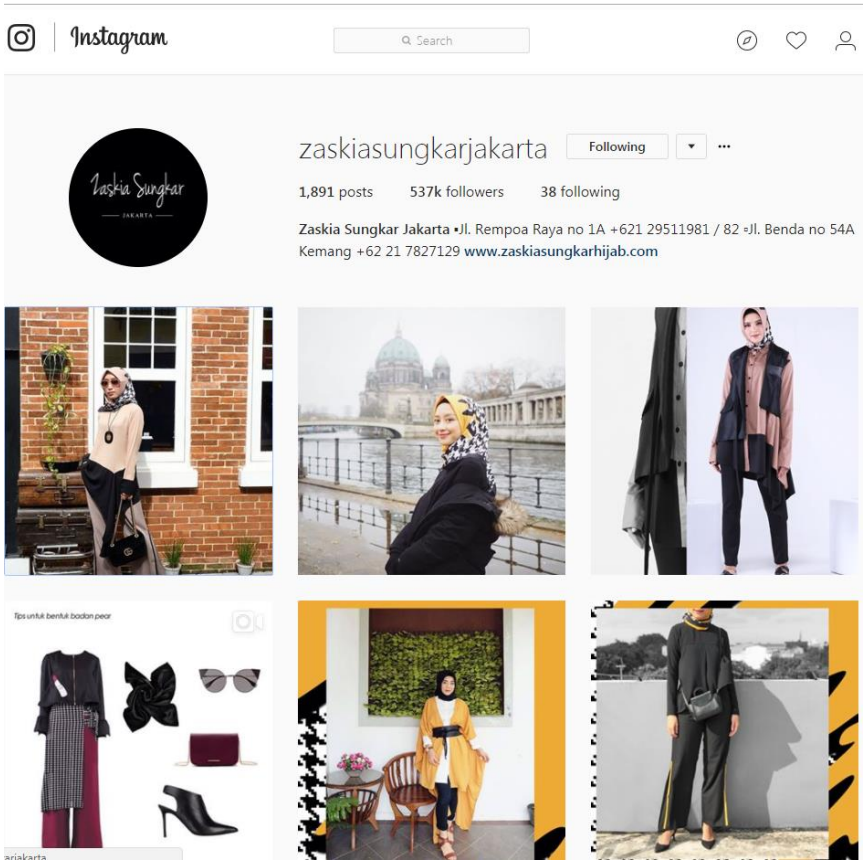

Figure 5.1.: Indonesian actress', Zaskia Sungkar's, Islamic fashion shop in her *Instagram* account. Source: Zaskia Sungkar.

[225] Zaskia Sungkar is an Indonesian actress, singer, and fashion designer. She is the eldest child of the actor Mark Sungkar. She was born in Jakarta 1990. For the collection of Zaskia Sungkar's products, see http://zaskiasungkarhijab.com/, accessed on 30 November 2017.

Many pop singers, actors and actresses, and band personnel have become increasingly pious. They have started wearing hijab, growing a beard and performing other activities, which are suggested in the Quran and hadiths. Audience of *dakwah* programmes on TV have two contrasting opinions concerning their change of lifestyle. Some see it beneficial for Indonesian public because they have followers, which may follow their paths to live in Islamic way. Some critics consider it as a strategy to participate in the Islamic trend to raise their popularity among Muslims. Afterwards, they use their popularity to attract followers to buy their Islamic products.

The increase of propagation of Islam broadcasts on television in Indonesia since the beginning of the twenty-first century is in line with the rise of the demand of Islamic products. Their needs of products stimulate investors to register their products to Islamic institutions such as MUI to get halal certificate. They use pious celebrities to promote, sell, and distribute their products to Muslims. On the other hand, Muslims are keen to become modern and pious at the same time. Therefore, they buy imported products, which have halal label, and those, which are promoted, sold, and distributed by pious celebrities. Modern here means that they have access to recent fashion designs, sophisticated technology, and economic development.

The consumption of Islamic products by middle class Muslims shows their effort to become stylish and find Islamic entertainment. Their engagement with programmes of propagation of Islam on television influences their perception on religion. In some occasions, middle class Muslims refer to programmes of propagation of Islam to deal with 'the fast-flowing current of social change and globalization' (Hasan 2013: 3). For example, there was a live audience, who asked whether Muslims were allowed to vote for non-Muslim in the elections, or to be vaccinated by foreign medicines. The majority of television preacher answer that Muslims are forbidden to vote for non-Muslim in the elections. Television preachers' opinion varies concerning vaccinations. These questions reflect socio-political conditions facing Muslims in Indonesian. The questions also show the dynamics of discourses surrounding *dakwah* programmes on TV.

In this account, Muslims to some extent can encourage the companies to provide the products that they need. The broadcast of propagation of Islam through television is the endeavour of television companies to provide Muslims a good television programme, which they may like to watch. Muslims audiences of *dakwah* programmes on TV not only become consumers but they also participate in the dynamics of the discourses of the

programmes. Political elites, investors, and business executives consider them a significant force to reach their goals: making profit for their companies or winning the elections.

In regards to dakwah programmes, Muslims, especially those who make up the middle class, expect good programmes, which can entertain and educate them at the same time. In fact, the quality of education in programmes of propagation of Islam can be lacking due to the domination of entertainment. Many viewers believe that the programmes on Indonesian television channels lack of education values, full of humours and jokes. In this respect, the viewers are vulnerable to being misled by what they watch on television (Hobart 2006: 347).

Dakwah on TV as entertainment

In this section, I elucidate upon the way audiences see *dakwah* programmes on TV in their everyday life to understand their perception about the programmes. Based on the preceding discussion about the attitude of watching *dakwah* programmes on TV during my fieldwork, I found that the audiences perceive the programmes as either an entertainment or a medium to improve their understanding of Islam. There are three reasons underlying this finding.

First, audiences are keen to watch *dakwah* programmes in which the preachers make jokes, tell funny stories about their experiences and sing songs with a beautiful voice. They like this type of preacher. It is not an entirely new phenomenon in Indonesian society. The audiences of *dakwah* programmes on TV are not different from those, who attend the events of propagation of Islam in other parts of society. Muslims will attend propagation of Islam, which is delivered by preachers, who are clever to make jokes, have beautiful voice to sing or recite the verses of the Quran, and can tell funny stories. This activity of propagation of Islam is conducted in weddings and circumcision celebrations across Indonesia. Propagation of Islam becomes the closing part after other entertaining agendas like a performance of *Dangdut*, 'the infectiously rhythmic music' and Muslims attend it to entertain themselves (Millie 2017: 1–4).

Second, the audience watch *dakwah* programmes on TV while doing other activities. This makes *dakwah* no difference from other entertaining programmes on television. They laugh at the jokes and funny stories in the programmes or just enjoy the images of the programmes. If the audience's

intention of watching *dakwah* programmes is to learn Islam, they will focus on hearing the messages of the programmes delivered by the preachers.

Third, *dakwah* programmes are broadcast when there are no entertaining programmes for audiences. Their competitor is only the news programmes, which leaves audiences no choice for entertaining programmes. They watch programmes of propagation of Islam as entertainment or they do not turn on the television set because they do not like the programmes broadcast in the same schedule as *dakwah*.

The audiences, who watch *dakwah* programmes on TV, enjoy the performances of programmes of propagation of Islam in terms of the design, decoration, host, preacher, and format of the programmes. The programmes are set up for audiences in various ways to attract them to watch. One of the entertaining parts of *dakwah* is the appointment of comedians to become hosts or attend the programmes. The format of *dakwah* programmes appeals to not only Muslims but also non-Muslims as mentioned in the second section of this chapter.

From religious authority towards public debates: Q&A session

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the routinisation of giving advice and recommendations for the audiences through the performances of *dakwah* in TV shows shapes the charisma of the TV preachers as part of religious authority (Turner 2007: 118). The Q&A session of *dakwah* programmes enhances that finding of Chapter 2. Religious authority can be established when there are some Muslims, who seek answers for religious matters from Muslim scholars (*mufti*). In the Q&A session, TV preachers play a role of a Muslim scholar, while the audiences who ask questions act *mustafti*, people who come to Muslim scholars in need of a fatwa or advice. Afterwards, the preachers will answer the questions from the audience referring to the Quran or Hadiths or using their own reasoning (Kaptein 2004: 122). TV preachers of *dakwah* programmes become new religious authority because they give advice, recommendation, answers or fatwas for the audiences.

On several occasions, advice and answers to the audience's questions in Q&A session of *dakwah* programmes on TV turn into public debates. This usually happens where debatable issues appeared in the programmes. The audiences asked questions about the issues because they wanted to hear the preachers' opinions. The audiences' responses to the answers of the preachers depended on their knowledge background of Islam. The audiences usually

ask the questions based on the topics debated by Muslims in the society such as the obligation to wear hijab or to do polygamy. The audiences and Muslims debated the answers of the preachers. The audiences of other programmes of *dakwah* often repeat the same questions to other preachers.

To know audiences' responses and receptions on the answers of the preachers, I interviewed the audience members, who attended the live broadcast of *dakwah* programmes and who watched from television. The debates cover the issues of hijab and polygamy.

1. The controversy of hijab

Indonesian Muslims heatedly debated the definition and legal status of hijab in Islamic law after a famous preacher and Quran interpreter, Quraish Shihab, stated that the hijab is not obligatory for Muslim women. This statement was delivered during a Q & A session of a *dakwah* programme on MetroTV. At that time, MetroTV invited him and his family to the programme to discuss about how to build a good Muslim family. The good family here was framed as smart household by having access to good education at universities abroad. Quraish Shihab himself graduated from Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt from bachelor to doctoral degrees. He served as the minister of religious affairs in 1998 under Suharto's regimes. Economic crisis, which hit Indonesia in 1997 and 1998 and the protests against Suharto's New Order regimes resulted in his short service as the minister of religious affairs as on 21 May 1998, Suharto announced his resignation as the president.

At the broadcast time, a woman in the live audience in the studio asked Quraish Shihab why his wife and daughters did not wear a hijab. The woman stated that it is an obligation for Muslim women to cover their bodies except palm and face. It is worth noting that Muslim scholars in Islamic jurisprudence have different interpretations concerning which part of women's bodies should be covered in public. The audience member's statement about hijab obligation is the opinion of the majority of Muslim scholars. The question of the audience was based on the Shafi'i School of Islamic Jurisprudence. In response to the question, Quraish Shihab answered:

> Muslim scholars have different opinion about hijab. Some define it as the coverage of all the bodies; others understand it as the hijab based on the verses of the Quran and hadith. I defined it as an honoured and proper dress for women. My youngest daughter, who studies medical sciences, wants to wear hijab, but I say to her that she should wear hijab based on her sincere intention, not because it

> is a trend now. Do not force Muslim women to wear hijab because Muslim scholars have different interpretations about it! Wearing hijab is better for Muslim women, but not wearing it is also good as long as they wear an honoured and proper dresses. The dispute of the interpretations of hijab is based on two verses of the Quran (Q.S. An-Nur: 31 and Al-Ahzab: 59). The majority of Muslim scholars have agreed that hijab is an obligation for Muslim women. Only a few allow them not to wear it. Quraish Shihab's statement about an honoured and proper dress for Muslim women is problematic because its interpretations vary. People may have different perceptions about it, which are influenced by their regions and cultures.[226]

Quraish Shihab's explanation about the hijab triggered a public debate. It was discussed in other *dakwah* programmes on TV, mosques, learning groups, and so on either it is selected as a topic or questioned by people. Due to his explanation, Quraish Shihab is accused of being misleading and destroying Islamic teachings. All television preachers oppose his opinion about hijab.[227] For example, the audience in Medan mentioned above argues that Quraish Shihab is liberal, who consider all opinions of Muslims scholars are true and legitimate. In fact, he further explains that there are illegitimate Muslim scholars whose opinions are based on their thought, not the Quran and hadiths. I believe that hijab is obligatory for women because it is the majority of Muslim scholars' opinion.[228]

However, a number of Muslim women listen to Quraish Shihab's opinion about hijab. For example, Sari a 28-year-old employee at the British Embassy in Jakarta states that she does not wear hijab because she follows the opinion of Muslim scholars' opinion as stated by Quraish Shihab. Although they are minority among the Muslims scholars, who consider hijab obligatory, they have reasons based on the Quran and hadith too. She argues that what is important in being a Muslim is that she knows the reason why she follows a particular Muslim scholar's opinion. She performs prayers a day, fasting and other obligations as is required in Islam.[229]

2. The definition of fairness in polygamy

[226] For detailed conversation between the audience and Quraish Shihab, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QqIec4MZ_Gw&t=7s, recorded on July 18, 2014 and accessed on November 25, 2017

[227] See for example https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5PR4IoGKrfY, recorded on July 7, 2017 and accessed on November 25, 2017.

[228] Interview with Widodo, Medan, January 21, 2015.

[229] Interview with Sari, Jakarta, April 4, 2016.

Polygamy has become widely debated since the decision of a popular television preacher, Aa Gym to take a second wife in 2011 (Hoesterey 2016: 175-187). Many Muslim women believe that Muslim men who practice polygamy will never be able to treat their wives fairly in terms of wealth and love. All television preachers have discussed and debated the topic of polygamy. For example, Mamah Dedeh in her programme of propagation of Islam, *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* explained:

> Islam allows Muslim men to have four wives as stated in the Quran that if you fear that you will not deal justly with the orphan girls, then marry those that please you of [other] women, two or three or four. But if you fear that you will not be just, then [marry only] one. That is more suitable that you may not incline [to injustice].[230] Just here means that Muslim men, who do polygamy, must be able to share their wealth, time, and feeling fairly to their wives. They must buy houses for their wives with the same price, share the same allocation of time with them, and have the same feeling over them. But if they feel different feelings about their wives, they must not express these feelings to their wives. To do just is hard.[231]

Mamah Dedeh's stance pictures Muslim majority opinions about polygamy in Indonesia. The viewers of *dakwah* programmes on TV have different opinions about this. Many Muslim women do not agree with polygamy because it is hard to practice fairly. Several audience members of *Mamah dan Aa Beraksi* in the studio do not agree with polygamy when they are asked by the host whether or not they allow their husband to do polygamy. In an interview about this topic, the audience in Jakarta also does not agree with polygamy.[232] Her gesture shows a rejection of those who practice polygamy. She provided Aa Gym's case of polygamy as an example of how at the end his marriage with his first wife turn to divorce. When I provided her another case of polygamy by Arifin Ilham, she argued that it was just the beginning for him. People would see how it worked later.[233]

As mentioned in Chapter 3, Arifin Ilham started polygamy after Aa Gym. Muslim women in Indonesia reacted to their cases of polygamy differently. Unlike Aa Gym, who received criticism and hatred, many Muslim women do not bother with his polygamy. It may be because the visualisation

[230] https://quran.com/4/3, accessed on December 1, 2017.
[231] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_pFhHMVw2a0, recorded on October 7, 2015 and accessed on October 17, 2017.
[232] Interview with Halimah, Jakarta, October 1, 2014.
[233] Interview with Halimah, Jakarta, Oktober 1, 2014.

of Arifin Ilham as a television preacher is not about the loving husband and family man like Aa Gym. His brand of preaching is the closeness to God by practising recitations.

The issue of polygamy is central in Indonesia. Indonesian government have a strict regulation for government offices and civil servants, who intend to do polygamy. Among other points in the regulation about polygamy are if they are men, they have to have permission from their boss to do polygamy. Women, who become government offices or civil servants, are not allowed to become the second, third, or fourth wife from the men, who do polygamy. Muslim women are not allowed to do polygamy (Wirastri and van Huis 2021, Nurmila 2009, and Feillard 1999).[234]

Based on these two issues of the topics of programmes of propagation of Islam, we can see how Muslims in Indonesia are struggling to define their identities in public sphere. The audiences do not always behave in accordance with the guidance and advice provided by the preachers of *dakwah* programmes on TV. Their positions are much more determined by their background of knowledge. This evidence shows the audience as an active receiver rather than as a victim of *dakwah* programmes on TV.

Conclusion

Watching *dakwah* programmes on TV stations is mostly a collective and complementary activity. Muslims in Jakarta and Medan watch *dakwah* programmes on TV stations together with other daily activities. They watch them while having their meals or chatting with their family members or friends at homes, restaurants, or other public areas. The audiences in Bali do not watch *dakwah* on television. These findings provide us understanding that *dakwah* programmes on TV are mostly viewed as entertainment by Muslims in Indonesia. In this respect, they are no different from other programmes on television channels in Indonesia. Like other entertainment programmes on television, audiences watch the programmes because they are designed to entertain with their format, jokes and funny stories delivered by the preachers and hosts of the programmes. They watch them when they want. Some viewers do not watch them and prefer other programmes to *dakwah*. Audiences watch the programmes while doing other activities. They place *dakwah* as entertainment programme with the expectation of having

[234] For more information about the regulation of polygamy, see http://www.hukumonline.com/klinik/detail/lt53ea39d17ed2e/aturan-hukum-jika-pns-ingin-berpoligami (regulations for civil servants to do polygamy), accessed on 1 December 2017.

additional value of education in it. The content of entertainment determines the success of *dakwah* programmes. These findings are similar to the interest of audiences of conventional activities of *dakwah* in the society.

I have found that Muslims as audiences in Indonesia follow the preachers, who can combine their *dakwah* with entertaining aspects such as funny stories, song, and beautiful recitation of the verses of the Quran. When television companies bring *dakwah* to their screen for the audiences, they try to provide the same package to attract the public in the country. In this respect, entertainment is more important than education aspect of *dakwah* programmes on TV. Many preachers become popular because of their skills to combine *dakwah* with entertainment. The findings in Bali shows the lack significance of *dakwah* programmes to Muslims in Bali. Many Muslims in Bali do not watch the programmes in their houses because they have already started their work. They also do not watch them in public spaces like in Jakarta and Medan because they are concerned about the sentiment of the majority of Hindu residents after the Bali bombings in 2002 and 2005. They prefer other television programmes such news or talk shows. They learn Islam through gathering in mosques rather than through *dakwah* programmes on TV. In fact, their presence on television brings Islamic learning to their private spaces because they can watch the programmes in their rooms, houses, and other places where they have access to television.

Although *dakwah* on TV are designed to entertain the audiences, it has formed alternative religious authorities for Muslims. Watching practice of *dakwah* on TV in daily basis creates the charisma of the preachers. Q&A sessions of *dakwah* programmes on TV provide alternative domains for Muslims seeking answers about religious matters. As a result, religious authority in post-Suharto Indonesia has been fragmented and fluid, not limited to Muslim scholars in *pesantren* or Muslim organisations (NU, Muhammadiyah, and MUI). Authoritative voices of Islam are now present on private TV stations. This fragmentation results in diverse discourses and public debates on Islam. Audiences' responses to *dakwah* programmes on TV depend on their Islamic knowledge, public discourses, and socio-political and cultural situation in the countries. The audiences ask the questions concerning the topics, which have been heatedly discussed and debated by the society. They raise the questions because they want to hear the preachers' answers about the topics. On many occasions, the preachers' answers do not put the end to the debates, but their answers evolve to be debated again and again in other activities of propagation of Islam by both audiences and preachers as

well as by the public in general. The process of question and answer between television audiences and preachers in *dakwah* programmes can be categorised as the formation of religious authority in which the audiences as students seek for answers from the preachers as their teachers.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

This study has shown that the rise of *dakwah* broadcasts on TV is more than just a commodification of Islam as suggested by Fealy (2008: 38), Hasan (2013: 5) and Hoesterey (2016b: 95-114). It is a part of the formation of religious authority through TV in the post-authoritarian era. It is part of an Islamic trend, which is motivated by and aims at domestic markets as well as Indonesian audiences globallyThis answers the question of competing ideologies behind the production of *dakwah* programmes on TV (in Chapter 1). It is a commodity, which is demanded by urban middle-class Muslims along with other 'Islamic' products such as movies, Muslim (halal) fashions, and tourism to seek economic and religious comfort through piety in the aftermath of the reformation movement in 1998. This high demand for Islamic products inspires TV companies, even those owned by non-Muslim stakeholders, to approve the broadcast of Islamic programmes. I found that the broadcast is a medium for the preachers to promote their performances, rhetorical skills and specialty of the content or brand of *dakwah* and to attract Muslims' attention. As a result, they receive many invitations to preach in various Muslim communities, which are economically beneficial. This finding shows that the real market for the TV preachers is not the TV shows alone but Muslim communities, which are anticipated to invite them to preach in their congregations. They receive payments for both the performances on TV programmes based on the agreed broadcasting contracts and in the Islamic learning groups throughout Indonesia. To be paid for preaching is not something new in the practices of *dakwah* in Indonesia, but to decide the amount of the payments based on contracts is considered misguided by the majority of Muslim scholars and Islamic teachings.

Moreover, beyond economic profit, the study shows the important role of TV in shaping a new religious authority in contract to traditional ones such as elder clerics or Islamic institutions. This religious authority is shaped through everyday production and reproduction of *dakwah* programmes which provide religious advice and answer questions from various audiences. The producers are unaware that religious authority can be formed through their everyday production and reproduction of *dakwah* programmes. The process of the formation fits well to the theory of 'routinization of charisma' of the

preachers (Turner 2007: 118). This charisma and recognition are gained by the preachers by giving advice daily through their shows. Further, religious authority is also formed when the preachers of the programmes act as good teachers to whom audiences as their students seek answers for their question regarding religious matters (Turner 2007: 119).

This new type of religious authority is different from the traditional one, which comes from Muslim scholars or Muslim organisations such as NU or Muhammadiyah, or Islamic institutions such as MUI with individual or collective advice or fatwas. Authority gained through preaching on TVs comes from individuals, who were not *ulama* before appearing on TV and are not necessarily affiliated with any Muslim organisations or Islamic institutions. Indeed, in their preaching we can recognise some similarities of their Islamic knowledge to that of NU, Muhammadiyah, or others. They are now the new voices involving in Islamic discursive tradition and religious debates among other voices of Islamic in Indonesia. This is possible to happen due to their appearances on TV shows. With this evidence, Indonesian Muslims are provided with choices to which voices they prefer to listen as results of media accessibility, 'mass education and growing literacy,' (Kaptein 2004: 128).

This religious authority is created with the help of TV professionals and comes from people whose specialty is not in Islamic knowledge. Two cases in this study show that popular TV preachers, Yusuf Mansur and Mamah Dedeh, have no specialty in Islamic knowledge. Yusuf Mansur is a businessman, who finds *dakwah* as a new way for his business in the name of the empowerment of Muslim society after facing bankruptcy several times. He even needs to show that he was innocent on several occasions to Indonesian financial authorities regarding his 'Islamic' businesses after he became a popular preacher. He was not trained to become a Muslim scholar who had studied Islamic knowledge in boarding school and in the Middle East (in Chapter 3). He built an Islamic boarding school and often invited Muslim scholars from Saudi Arabia to teach there after he became a popular TV preacher. This step was vital in consolidating his legitimacy and authority. Mamah Dedeh is also not trained in Islamic boarding school to become a Muslim scholar, but she has a talent for public speaking, which she possibly learned from her father, who was a preacher. Her background and rhetorical skill make audiences like her preaching style which is characterised by her firm and frank, yet humorous, statements (in Chapter 3). Both Yusuf Mansur and Mamah Dedeh emerge alternative voices of Islam, which challenge and

compete with traditional voices of authority in Indonesian society. Their voices are not confined to religious matters, but also political matters. This study fulfils the lacuna in the media and Islamic studies that religious authority can be shaped not only in the radio (Sunarwoto 2016) and the Internet (Hosen 2008).

In respect to adding value to their legitimacy of Islam, Yusuf Mansur and Mamah Dedeh have their stories of the miraculous transformative life experiences before they become popular TV preachers that strengthen their claims to religious authority. This life transformation is labelled by Burhani as 'conversion narratives,' a shift from a bad Muslim to a good one (Burhani 2020: 157). However, what is missing for Burhani's study is the key role of media in shaping their charisma and legitimacy of Islamic knowledge. Indeed, Yusuf Mansur and Mamah Dedeh have miraculous transformation in their lives, yet to reach nationwide success as top rating TV preachers they use various media to boost their recognition among Indonesian Muslims. Before performing on TV, their popularity is limited. This finding can be proven by looking at the rise and the fall of popular TV preachers. It is not the conversion narratives, which can maintain their popularity among Indonesian Muslims, but it is their 'branded' topics of preaching that can fulfil that (in Chapter 3).

In fact, compared with Aa Gym, Yusuf Mansur and Mamah Dedeh indicates a new development in terms of the educational background of popular TV preachers. Unlike Aa Gym who never graduated from Islamic boarding schools or diploma from Islamic schools (Hoesterey 2016: 216), Yusuf Mansur and Mamah Dedeh studied Islam in Islamic elementary and secondary schools and then at Islamic institution (IAIN) (in Chapter 3). Therefore, there is a change of how the producers choose the preachers for their TV shows. This change of criteria for TV preachers is a response from the producers to the criticism from Muslim scholars and organisations that their programmes emphasise merely the entertaining aspects, while neglecting the important of the mission of *dakwah* to call the audiences to improve their Islamic knowledge and piety. There is a negotiation between economic and religious values in the production of the programmes. When Aa Gym's popularity fell after he announced his second marriage in December 2016, Yusuf Mansur and Mamah Dedeh emerged as the new icons for *dakwah* programmes on TV. They often cite and refer Arabic version of the Quran and Hadith unlike Aa Gym who prefers to read just the Indonesian translations (in Chapter 3). This evidence matches the public demand to have

TV preachers with better qualification in Islamic knowledge. This development marks the process of Islamisation of secular popular TV shows including talk shows, quizzes, and interactive dialogues in terms of adding Islamic substances to the programmes without decreasing the entertaining ones. This process is typical in Southeast Asia, especially in Indonesia and Malaysia, where Muslim societies have tendencies to conservative Islam and life-styles (Azra 2006:164). In respect of the rise of *dakwah* programmes, there are more and more celebrities change their orientation to combine economic and religious benefits, which they call it as *hijrah* (move to religious life-style), Islamic fashion and cosmetics, halal brands in food and other materials and halal tourism.

Furthermore, the importance of commercial TV with its broadcasting coverage for *dakwah* has captured the attention of Muslim organisations throughout the country, but it is the Salafi Radio station, Rodja, which has positioned their programmes on Trans7 and TransTV. I found that the 'conversion' of the producers of the two TV channels, is crucial to the broadcast of Salafi agendas on TV after they follow their Islamic learning groups and radio regularly to become better Muslims. Their appearance in the commercial TV networks since 2010 is underlined by the anxieties of the producers to the need of more qualified Islamic programmes. Rodja itself has been central in religious discourses and debates in Indonesian public spheres regarding their agendas to purify Islamic practices from heretical values and improve the contents of *dakwah* in TV shows. The Salafi programmes on Trans7 and TransTV are characterised as very 'Islamic' (with no humour, no celebrities and advertisements). As mentioned in Chapter 4, Salafi preachers criticise some practices performed by the followers of NU in the programmes, which they regard as misleading. They also condemn some Muslim countries including Indonesia, which use democratic system while offering Islamic caliphate (*khilafah*) as the sole solution to the crises happening in the Muslim countries. Their blatant criticism upsets NU and FPI leaders, whose followers are performing the practices and believe in democracy as the best system for Indonesian politics. They challenge religious and state authorities. As a result, there have been some meetings and dialogues mediated by KPI to settle the debates and conflicts. This evidence shows contestation and competition of opinions of what is regarded Islamic or not between religious authorities in TV shows and the society. In other cases, TV preachers, on some occasions, are forced by Islamic leaders from NU or MUI to publicly apologise on TV and revise their religious advices because they consider them misleading (in

Chapter 3). These various of events in this study proves that religious authority formed in TV shows become competitive with the ones in the society and indicate how Indonesian Islam transformed to become more conservative.

Religious authority is also reinforced with its remediation in the forms of postings on YouTube channels, social media accounts, blogs, and books by the creative or management teams and followers. It transforms the popular TV preachers into public leaders, whose opinions, political votes and life-style are considered and followed by large audiences. This study shows that remediation of *dakwah* programmes proves the interconnectivity of media technologies and blurs which medium has more important role and more immediate than the others. It also affects watching accessibility where audiences can choose when they want to watch the programmes. They do not need to worry because they miss the live broadcast of the programmes, they can watch them anytime and anywhere in the Internet. They can also unexpectedly encounter the contents of the programmes through newsfeeds of social media such Twitter or Facebook. This allows popular TV preachers to have strong recognition in the Muslim communities.

In respect of viewing practices, watching *dakwah* programmes on TV is, to a certain extent, not a choice because almost all the *dakwah* programmes are broadcast at the same time leaving them no choice if they are inclined to view TV shows. Although the viewing practice of *dakwah* on TV has similarities to *sinetron* viewing practice in terms of watching as leisure and entertainment (Nilan 2001), audiences have insights about Islamic knowledge which to some extent influence their everyday activities for those who choose to follow the preachers' advices through preaching or Q&A session. It is like a fatwa from individual Muslim scholar (*mufti*), which is not legally binding for the audience, who ask for them (*mustafti),* they are free to decide whether to follow it or ignore it (Kaptein 2004: 115 and Hasyim 2015: 29). To many audiences, watching the programmes is not their primary activity, rather than complementary one to others like preparing breakfast or reading the Quran.

Furthermore, preference for watching *dakwah* programmes is influenced mainly by the figure of the preachers, style of preaching, and topics of preaching regarding everyday Muslim lives. The figure of Yusuf Mansur as a successful Muslim businessman establishes a group of audiences, which considers him as an ideal Muslim figure to follow. On the other hand, to many Muslim women, Mamah Dedeh is an ideal figure in terms of her success as a mother and preacher. Both preachers use *Betawi* dialect and style

in their preaching, which are considered by many as clear, direct and firm. Yusuf Mansur provides solutions to economic problems through his preaching topic, *sedekah* while Mamah Dedeh through *keluarga sakinah*. These topics are very close to everyday reality of Indonesian Muslims. These 'brands' of preaching has kept them hired by TV stations and maintained their popularity among Indonesian public. These preferences form groups of audiences, which to certain extent resemble fans of celebrities.

This study has sought to create better understanding of the relation between Islam and media by showing that they influence each other to fulfil their mission of Islamisation or commodification. Audiences, to a certain extent, have the agency to pressure the producers to meet their demands for qualified preachers and better shows of *dakwah* on TV. This study shows that the encounter between Islam (*dakwa*h) and media (television) often, if not always, results in a competition to gain domination among them, which is dynamic and changing. To TV industry, this study indicates that by fulfilling the demands of Muslim leaders, organisations, and audiences for better programmes, they can still achieve their economic goals.

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SUMMARY

This dissertation is about the broadcasting of *dakwah* on Indonesian TV stations. It deals with the production and circulation of *dakwah* programmes on TV and elucidates the social and educational backgrounds of popular TV preachers in order to understand the rise of the programmes in post-Suharto Indonesia. Furthermore, this dissertation discusses the competition among various Muslim organisations to influence the production of *dakwah* programmes and the formation of religious authority through the broadcasting of *dakwah* programmes on TV channels. This dissertation is based on one-year ethnographic fieldwork in Jakarta, Medan, and Bali, which includes observations and interviews with the producers, preachers, and audiences of *dakwah* programmes, Muslim leaders, and members of Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPI).

In chapter 1, I describe the significant increase of *dakwah* programmes on Indonesian TV channels in the beginning of the twenty first century shortly after the fall of Suharto's authoritarian regime in 1998. I also discuss the broadcasting of *dakwah* on TV during the Suharto period to understand the transformation of *dakwah* activities on TV in post-Suharto. Afterwards, I explain the proliferation of commercial TV channels after the demise of the authoritarian regime, which has a pivotal role in the rise of the broadcast of *dakwah* on TV stations.

Chapter 2 deals with the production of *dakwah* programmes and how they appeal to audiences, which lead to a variety of formats of *dakwah* programme ranging from the teaching classroom model to a talk show with a range of topics. The production of *dakwah* on TV involves creative teams to arrange the performances and find relevant topics. *Dakwah* programmes are aired live on TV, and on several occasions live from Islamic historical sites when the preachers deliver stories about them to create a sense of immediacy. The programmes are not only circulated through their broadcasting on TV, but are also spread through other digital media platform such as Facebook and YouTube, either by the manager of the preachers or their followers. The daily *dakwah* programmes on TV have formed a medium for the preachers as teachers and the audiences as students to learn about Islam. These daily interactions create the charisma of TV preachers among their audiences, who consider them as authoritative voices of Islam. The production of *dakwah*

programmes is the result of the negotiation between producers' and preachers' interests, between commodity and public piety.

Chapter 3 elaborates the social and educational backgrounds of popular TV preachers in which I take Yusuf Mansur as a case study to explain the natures and transformation of TV preachers. Physical appearance and rhetorical skill are important attributes of popular TV preachers because they can attract audiences to watch their *dakwah* programmes. 'Miraculous' turns of life experiences from bad to good or from poor to successfully rich people are also appealing to the audiences. Social and Islamic education background play less important roles in creating popular TV preachers. The transformation of TV preachers occurred in 2005 when criticisms about the lack of Islamic education background of TV preachers were expressed by Muslim leaders of various Muslim organisations like Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI), Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), and Muhammadiyah. Since 2005, there have been more TV preachers with Islamic education backgrounds. Networking among preachers is also important to become popular TV preachers. Some TV producers use this networking to find their preachers for their *dakwah* programmes based on the recommendation from other preachers because this method is cheaper and less time-consuming than conducting a casting to hire TV preachers. Other producers observe talented preachers in mosques and Islamic learning groups. With their popularity and charisma, the popular TV preachers become leaders for their followers, who take their opinions into account in their religious, cultural, and socio-political matters.

Chapter 4 provides a picture of the contestation of religious authority among Muslim organisations in the broadcasting of *dakwah* on TV stations. The emergence of Salafi *dakwah* on TV stations exacerbates the criticisms of the leaders of Muslim organisations and the public against *dakwah* programmes on TV. They have criticised the programmes because of the contents which are more entertaining than educative. The Salafi *dakwah* programmes were brought to the commercial TV stations by producers, who were interested in and follow Salafism. Previously, Muslim organisations like NU and Muhammadiyah criticised the light contents of *dakwah* on TV because the preachers are not qualified in Islamic education. After the emergence of Salafi *dakwah* programme in 2007, they questioned the TV stations for their contents of *dakwah*, which forbid some Islamic rituals commonly practiced by the majority of Muslims in Indonesia, promote the implementation of Islamic law, and propose the establishment of Islamic state. The criticism of various Muslim organisations such as MUI, NU, and

Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) against the broadcasting of Salafi *dakwah* on TV forced KPI to mediate the dispute between these Muslim organisations and TV producers. Muslim organisations demand that Salafi *dakwah* programmes respect the different interpretations in Islam. They also ask the preachers to discuss the contents of their *dakwah* with MUI before the broadcasting.

In chapter 5, I discuss the practices of watching *dakwah* programmes on TV channels, which consist of watching activities and various backgrounds of audiences of *dakwah* programmes on TV in Jakarta, Medan, and Bali. Watching *dakwah* on TV is not a single activity, it is always accompanied by other activities such as having breakfast or preparing for work. As the majority of the audiences of the live broadcasting, Muslim women are more enthusiastic about watching the programmes than Muslim men. In Jakarta and Medan, they watch the programmes in homes, restaurants, stores, offices, and so forth as long as a TV set is available. Bali is an exception. Muslims in Bali do not watch Islamic programmes on TV in public spaces such as restaurants and offices. One of the reasons is because the majority of the people, who live in Bali are Hindu. Most of Muslims in Bali do not watch the programmes in their homes either. Their activities are centralised in mosques and Islamic learning groups. Most of the audiences in Jakarta, Medan, and Denpasar consider *dakwah* on TV as entertainment. This is the reason why there are several non-Muslims who also watch it in their routines for entertainment.

This dissertation shows the important role of TV in the construction of religious authority, which becomes fragmented in Muslim societies like in Indonesia partly because of televised *dakwah*. Most of the current researches on *dakwah* activities focus mainly on social media like Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram but neglect the role of other media like TV. In fact, TV still plays an important role in daily activities of Indonesian society with its programmes including news, soap opera, reality show, and *dakwah*. Muslims watch TV programmes such as *dakwah*, news, soap operas, talk and reality shows during their leisure and busy time. Presidential candidates and political leaders use TV stations to promote their political agendas to gain supports from the society.

SAMENVATTING

Deze dissertatie gaat over het uitzenden van *dakwah* op Indonesische televisiezenders. Het behandelt de productie en verspreiding van *dakwah*-programma's op tv en verheldert de sociale en educatieve achtergronden van belangrijke tv-predikanten om de opkomst van deze programma's in de post-Suharto periode in Indonesië te begrijpen. Bovendien behandelt deze dissertatie de betwisting van verschillende moslimorganisaties om invloed te hebben op de productie van *dakwah*-programma's en de vorming van religieuze autoriteit door middel van het uitzenden van *dakwah*-programma's op televisiezenders. Deze dissertatie is gebaseerd op eenjarig etnografisch veldwerk in Jakarta, Medan en Bali, waarin observaties en interviews met de makers, predikanten en het publiek van *dakwah*-programma's en andere relevante informanten zoals moslimleiders en leden van de Indonesische Omroep Commissie (KPI) zijn verwerkt.

In hoofdstuk 1 beschrijf ik de aanzienlijke toename van *dakwah*-programma's op Indonesische televisiezenders aan het begin van de eenentwintigste eeuw, vlak na de val van het autoritaire regime van Suharto in 1998. In dit hoofdstuk bespreek ik ook het uitzenden van *dakwah* op tv gedurende de Suharto-periode om de transformatie van *dakwah*-activiteiten op tv in het post-Suharto tijdperk te begrijpen. Daarna behandel ik ook het punt dat de snelle toename van commerciële televisiezenders na de val van het autoritaire regime een doorslaggevende rol speelt in de opkomst van het uitzenden van *dakwah* op tv.

Hoofdstuk 2 behandelt de productie van geschikte *dakwah*-programma's voor een divers publiek wat leidt tot een verscheidenheid aan *dakwah*-programma's die meer geschikt kunnen zijn voor een schoolklas of voor een talkshow waarin herhalende onderwerpen aan bod komen. De productie van *dakwah* op tv omvat creatieve teams die de podia gereed maken en recente geschikte onderwerpen zoeken voor de programma's. *Dakwah*-programma's worden live uitgezonden op tv en in sommige gevallen live vanaf de islamitische historische locaties waar de predikanten verhalen vertellen over deze locatie om op deze manier de betrokkenheid van het publiek te vergroten. De programma's worden niet alleen uitgezonden op tv,

maar worden ook verspreid op andere digitale mediaplatformen zoals Facebook en YouTube, door de managers van de predikanten of door hun volgers. Het dagelijks uitzenden van *dakwah*-programma's heeft voor een medium gezorgd waarbij de predikanten de rol van docent hebben en het publiek die van een student die over de islam leert. Deze repetitieve activiteiten creëren het charisma van de tv-predikanten bij hun volgers, die hen zien als referenties met betrekking tot de islam. De productie van *dakwah*-programma's is het resultaat van de onderhandeling tussen de belangen van de makers en de predikanten, tussen die van koopwaar en publieke vroomheid.

Hoofdstuk 3 werkt de sociale en educatieve achtergronden van populaire tv-predikanten verder uit. Hierbij neem ik Yusuf Mansur als voorbeeld om de aard en de transformatie van tv-predikanten te verklaren. Het fysieke voorkomen en retorische vaardigheden zijn belangrijk om een populaire tv-predikant te worden, omdat zij het publiek kunnen aantrekken om hun *dakwah*-programma's te bekijken. Miraculeuze veranderingen tijdens het leven zoals van slecht naar goed of van arm naar succesvol en rijk zijn ook aantrekkelijk voor het publiek. Sociale en islamitische achtergronden spelen een kleinere rol bij de ontwikkeling van een populaire tv-predikant. Een verandering treedt op wanneer kritiek of het gebrek aan islamitische achtergrond van de tv-predikant aan het licht komt door een moslimleider van diverse moslimorganisaties zoals MUI, NU en Muhammadiyah. Naderhand zijn er meer tv-predikanten met islamitische educatieve achtergronden. Het netwerken onder predikanten is ook belangrijk om een populaire tv-predikant te worden. Sommige tv-producenten netwerken om predikanten voor hun *dakwah*-programma's te vinden nadat zij zijn aanbevolen door andere predikanten. Dit is goedkoper en sneller dan een casting te houden voor geschikte tv-predikanten. Anderen observeren potentiële en getalenteerde predikanten in moskeeën en islamitische onderwijsgroepen. Door middel van hun populariteit en charisma worden populaire tv-predikanten leiders voor hun volgers, die met hun meningen rekening houden bij zaken met betrekking tot sociale en politieke doelen.

Hoofdstuk 4 geeft het beeld van de betwisting van religieuze autoriteit onder moslimorganisaties bij het uitzenden van *dakwah* op televisiezenders weer. De opkomst van Salafi *dakwah* op televisiezenders door Salafi Rodja-gemeenschappen, verergert de kritiek tegen het uitzenden van *dakwah*-programma's op tv. Voorheen bekritiseerden moslimorganisaties zoals NU

en Muhammadiyah de lichte inhoud van *dakwah* op tv omdat de predikanten niet voldoende geschoold waren in het islamitisch onderwijs. Naderhand bekritiseren zij de televisiezenders, die Salafi *dakwah*-programma's uitzenden, voor de inhoud van hun *dakwah*, welke sommige islamitische gebruiken die door de meerderheid in Indonesië worden nageleefd, verbieden. Zij verklaren *khilafah* als een beter politiek systeem dan democratie. De kritiek op Salafi *dakwah* op tv van verschillende moslimorganisaties zoals NU, Muhammadiyah, FPI en anderen dwingen de KPI om het conflict tussen televisiezenders, predikanten en moslimorganisaties op te lossen. Moslimorganisaties eisen dat Salafi *dakwah*-programma's de verschillende interpretaties van de islam binnen de verschillende moslimgemeenschappen respecteert. Zij vragen ook aan de predikanten om de inhoud van hun *dakwah* te bespreken met MUI voordat de uitzending plaatsvindt. Zij vragen de producers om predikanten te vinden voor hun programma's bij NU, Muhammadiyah of MUI, welke de verschillende interpretaties van de islam begrijpen.

In hoofdstuk 5 behandel ik de gebruiken van het kijken van *dakwah*-programma's op televisiezenders. Het omvat de activiteit van het kijken en de verschillende achtergronden van het publiek van de *dakwah*-programma's op tv in Jakarta, Medan en Bali. Het kijken van *dakwah* op tv is niet een losstaande activiteit. Het wordt altijd gedaan in combinatie met het ontbijt of het gereed maken voor werk. Moslimvrouwen vormen de meerderheid van de kijkers van de live-uitzendingen en zij zijn vaak enthousiaster dan moslimmannen. In Jakarta en Medan kijken zij de programma's thuis, in restaurants, winkels, kantoren of op andere plaatsen zolang er maar een televisietoestel aanwezig is. Bali is een uitzondering. Moslims in Bali kijken geen islamitische programma's op tv in publieke ruimtes, zoals restaurants en kantoren. En van deze redenen is dat de meerderheid van de bevolking in Bali hindoe is. Moslims in Bali kijken deze programma's thuis ook niet. Hun activiteiten vinden plaats in moskeeën of islamitische leergroepen. Het merendeel van het publiek in Jakarta, Medan en Denpasar ziet *dakwah* op tv als entertainment. Dit is de reden dat er ook verschillende niet-islamitische groepen zien die deze programma's bekijken, als een bron van entertainment.

Deze dissertatie laat de belangrijke rol van tv zien in het creëren van een religieuze autoriteit, welke verder gefragmenteerd raakt in moslimgemeenschappen zoals in Indonesië door de *dakwah*-programma's op tv. Het grootste deel van het huidige onderzoek naar *dakwah*-activiteiten richt

zich vooral op sociale media zoals Facebook, YouTube en Instagram, maar verwaarloost de rol van tv in *dakwah*-activiteiten. De tv speelt nog steeds een belangrijke rol in het dagelijks leven van Indonesiërs, met programma's zoals het nieuws, soapseries, realityseries en *dakwah*. Moslims kijken tv-programma's zoals *dakwah*, het nieuws, soapseries, talkshows en realityseries tijdens hun vrije tijd, maar ook als zij bezig zijn. Presidentskandidaten en politieke leiders gebruiken tv-stations om hun politieke agenda te promoten en om steun te krijgen van de maatschappij.

RINGKASAN

Disertasi ini membahas tentang penyiaran dakwah di stasiun-stasiun TV Indonesia. Disertasi ini berkaitan dengan pembuatan dan penyebaran acara-acara dakwah di TV dan memaparkan latar belakang sosial dan pendidikan para pendakwah TV terkenal untuk memahami lonjakan acara-acara dakwah di TV di Indonesia pasca Suharto. Kemudian, disertasi ini mendiskusikan persaingan berbagai ormas Islam untuk memiliki pengaruh dalam pembuatan acara-acara dakwah dan pembentukan otoritas agama melalui penyiaran acara-acara dakwah di stasiun-stasiun TV. Disertasi ini berdasarakan kerja lapangan etnografi selama satu tahun di Jakarta, Medan, dan Bali yang terdiri dari observasi dan wawancara dengan para produser, para pendakwah, para penonton, pimpinan ormasi Islam, dan anggota Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia (KPI).

Dalam bab 1, saya menjelaskan lonjakan signifikan acara-acara dakwah di TV Indonesia pada awal abad ke-21, tidak lama setelah rejim otoriter Suharto jatuh pada tahun 1998. Dalam bab ini, saya juga mendiskusikan penyiaran dakwah di TV pada masa Suharto untuk memahami transformasi kegiatan-kegiatan dakwah di TV pasca Suharto. Setelah itu, saya menjelaskan banyaknya stasiun-stasiun TV komersial setelah rejim otoriter jatuh yang berperan penting dalam meningkatnya acara dakwah di stasiun TV.

Bab 2 mendiskusikan pembuatan acara-acara dakwah dan bagaimana caranya acara-acara dakwah memikat para penonton yang berakibat banyaknya ragam format acara dakwah dari mulai model kelas sampai model bincang-bincang atau talkshow dengan topik yang beragam. Pembuatan acara dakwah di TV melibatkan tim kreatif untuk menghias panggung dan menemukan judul-judul yang menarik untuk acara dakwah. Acara dakwah disiarkan langsung di TV dan dalam waktu-waktu tertentu disiarkan langsung dari tempat-tempat bersejarah ketika pendakwah menceritakan cerita-cerita tentang tempat-tempat bersejarah untuk menciptakan kesan langsung dalam acara-acara dakwah untuk penonton. Acara-acara dakwah tidak hanya disebar melalui penyiaran TV tapi diserbarkan melalui jenis-jenis media lain seperti Facebook dan YouTube juga baik oleh manajer pendakwah atau para penonton. Penyiaran acara-acara dakwah di TV setiap hari membentuk sebuah media bagi pendakwah sebagai guru dan penonton sebagai murid untuk belajar tentang Islam. Kegiatan-kegiatan yang terus berulang ini mencipatkan karisma para pendakwah TV diantara para penontonnya yang

melihat mereka sebagai referensi untuk Islam. Pembuatan acara-acara dakwah di TV merupakan hasil dari negosiasi antara kepentingan para produser dan para pendakwah, antara komiditas dan kesalihan publik.

Bab 3 menjabarkan latar belakang sosial dan pendidikan para pendakwah TV yang populer dimana saya menjadikan Yusuf Mansur sebagai sebuah studi kasus untuk memotret karakteristik dan transformasi para pendakwah TV. Penampilan fisik dan keterampilan retorika penting untuk menjadi pendakwah TV terkenal karena mereka dapat menarik perhatian penonton untuk menonton acara dakwah mereka. Perubahan ajaib dari pengalaman-pengalaman hidup, dari pebuatan jahat menjadi baik atau miskin menjadi kaya dan sukses adalah kisah-kisah yang menarik perhatian para penonton. Latar belakang sosial dan pendidikan Islam memainkan peran yang kurang penting dalam menciptakan pendakwah TV populer. Tranformasi pendakwah TV terjadi pada tahun 2005 ketika beberapa kritik tentang kurangnya latar belakang pendidikan Islam para pendakwah TV disampaikan oleh pimpinan beberapa ormas Islam seperti Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI), Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) dan Muhammadiyah. Sejak tahun 2005, muncul lebih banyak para pendakwah TV dengan latar belakang pendidikan Islam. Jejaring diantara para pendakwah juga penting untuk menjadi pendakwah TV terkenal. Beberapa produser TV menggunakan jejaring ini untuk menemukan para pendakwah untuk acara-acara dakwah berdasarkan rekomendasi para pendakwah lain karena cara ini lebih murah dan tidak memakan waktu daripada mengadakan *casting* untuk menemukan pendakwah TV. Para produser lain mencari pendakwah berbakat dan pontesial di masjid-masjid dan majelis-majelis kajian Islam. Dengan popularitas dan karisma mereka, para pendakwah TV populer menjadi pemimpin bagi para pengikutnya yang mempertimbangkan pendapat mereka terkait masalah-masalah agama, budaya, sosial-politik.

Bab 4 menyediakan gambaran-gambaran kontestasi otoritas agama diantara ormas-ormas Islam dalam penyiaran acara-acara dakwah di stasiun-stasiun TV. Munculnya acara dakwah Salafi di stasiun TV yang dibawa oleh produser dan komunitas Salafi Rodja mempertajam kritikan terhadap penyiaran acara-acara dakwah di TV. Sebelumnya, ormasi Islam seperti NU dan Muhammadiyah mengkritik bahasan-bahasan ringan dakwah di TV karena para pendakwah tidak berkualifikasi pendidikan Islam. Selanjutnya, mereka mempertanyakan stasiun-stasiun TV yang menyiarkan acara-acara dakwah Salafi karena isi dakwah mereka yang mengharamkan beberapa ritual Islam yang biasa dipraktikkan oleh mayoritas Muslim di Indonesia dan

mempromosikan system khilafah sebagai sebuah system politik yang lebih baik daripada demokrasi. Kritikan berbagai ormas Islam seperti MUI, NU, and Front Pembela Islam (FPI) terhadap dakwah Salafi di TV memaksa KPI untuk memediasi perselisihan antara ormas Islam dan pihak stasiun TV. Ormas Islam menuntut acara dakwah Salafi untuk menghormati perbedaan penafsiran dalam Islam. Mereka juga meminta pendakwah untuk mendiskusikan isi dakwah mereka dengan MUI sebelum penyiaran.

Dalam bab 5, saya membahas praktik menonton acara-acara dakwah di stasiun-stasiun TV yang terdiri dari kegiatan menonton dan berbagai macam latar belakang penonton acara-acara dakwah di TV di Jakarta, Medan, Bali. Menonton acara dakwah di TV bukan sebuah aktivitas tunggal, melainkan selalu dibarengi dengan kagiatan-kegiatan lain seperti sambil sarapan pagi atau sambil persiapan berangkat kerja. Sebagai mana mayoritas penonton langsung, perempuan muslim lebih antusias untuk menonton acara-acara dakwah daripada laki-laki. Di Jakarta dan Medan, mereka menonton acara-acara dakwah di rumah, restauran, toko, kantor, dan seterusnya selama ada perangkat TV. Bali adalah pengecualian. Muslim di Bali tidak menonton acara-acara dakwah di TV di tempat-tempat publik seperti restauran dan kantor. Salah satu alasannya adalah karena mayoritas orang yang tinggal di Bali beragama Hindu. Kebanyakan Muslim di Bali juga tidak menonton acara-acara dakwah di TV di rumah-rumah mereka. Aktivitas mereka terpusat di masjid dan pengajian-pengajian. Kebanyakan audiens di Jakarta, Medan, dan Denpasar melihat acara dakwah sebagai hiburan. Itu alasannya mengapa ada beberapa non-muslim yang menontonnya dalam rutinitas mereka sehari-hari sebagai hiburan.

Disertasi ini menunjukkan peran penting TV dalam mengkonstruksi otoritas agama yang menjadi terfragmentasi dalam masyarakat muslim seperti di Indonesia, sebagiannya karena siaran dakwah di TV. Kebanyakan penelitian tentang dakwah saat ini fokus pada media sosial seperti Facebook, YouTube, dan Instagram tapi mengabaikan peran TV dalam kegiatan-kegiatan dakwah. Faktanya, TV memainkan peranan penting dalam aktivitas keseharian masyarakat muslim Indonesia dengan berbagai acara seperti berita, sinetron, *reality show*, dan dakwah. Muslim menontonnya di waktu luang dan sibuk. Kandidat presiden dan pimpinan partai politik menggunakan TV untuk mempromosikan agenda politik mereka untuk mendapatkan dukungan dari masyarakat.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Syahril Siddik was born in North Labuhanbatu, North Sumatera on October 22, 1984. He completed his primary school at Sekolah Dasar Babussalam in North Sumatera in 1998. Afterwards, he went to Tasikmalaya, West Java to study at Pondok Pesantren Al-Mukhtariyah where he completed his junior high school in 2001. He continued his study at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) Cipasung and graduated in 2004. He obtained his bachelor degree in English Language and Literature at the State Islamic University (UIN) Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang in 2008. He pursued his study with the scholarship from Training Indonesia's Young Leaders Programme (TIYL) at Leiden University in 2010. He obtained his Master of Arts in Islamic Studies at Leiden University in 2011. Before continuing his study to doctoral degree at Leiden University, he was a lecturer and staff of vice rector for academic and international relation affairs at the State Islamic University (UIN) Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang in 2011 - 2013. Syahril has written book chapters, articles for journals and newspapers on Islam, media, and human rights in Indonesia. He is also involved with Indonesian diaspora activities in The Netherlands. He became the chairman of Indonesian Students Association (PPI) in Leiden in 2010 – 2011 and the vice-chairman of the Special Branch of Nahdlatul Ulama (PCI NU) in The Netherlands in 2014 – 2018.

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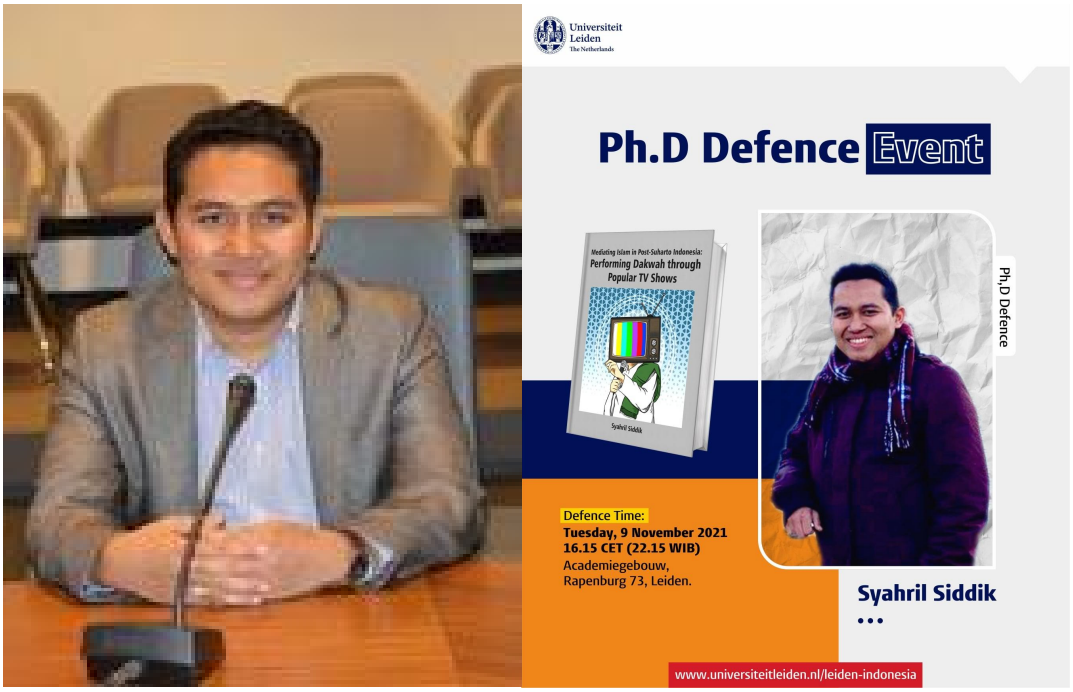

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